Lakas puts Roco on top of list of 18 Senate bets

STORY ON PAGE A2

IN *Saturday* SPECIAL

BROSNAN

- Pierce Brosnan loves playing James Bond
- Cesar Montano, show biz survivor
- George Lucas ponders life after 'Star Wars'

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Universe earliest image seen for first time

WASHINGTON—Astronomers on Thursday published images of the universe in its earliest stages that were captured at an observatory high in the Chilean Andes, reinforcing the Big Bang theory of the origin of galaxies.

The images show the oldest light ever emitted by the universe in the closest detail ever observed, and were taken by

UNIVERSE/A4

Palace won't budge on pact with Moro rebs

LETTER TO BURNHAMS

'How much longer must we wait?'

"WHO would have thought one year after you were taken hostage, you will still be held captive, together with Ediborah Yap, against your will. The question is the same in all our hearts. How much longer must we wait before you are united with your children?" said the open letter of Bob Meisel for the New Tribes Mission (NTM) addressed to "Dear Martin and Gracia" to mark the one year since they were abducted by the Abu Sayyaf on May 27, 2001.

The Burnhams are the last remaining hostages taken from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan. Another hostage, Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap, who was taken from Lamitan, Basilan, is still a hostage with the Burnhams.

Missionaries for the NTM, the Burnhams came to the Philippines 15 years ago.

"We, your family and friends, want to remind you today that we love you very much and are praying for you every moment of every day," begins Meisel's letter.

"For one year your three children,

HOW/A6

BEEN a year since they last saw their dad and mom. The Burnham children from left, Zach, Mindy and Jeff. NEW TRIBES MISSION WEBSITE

Gov't: National interest is not compromised

By Carlito Pablo,
Cynthia D. Balana
and Juliet L. Javellana

MALACAÑANG is bucking strong opposition from lawmakers and standing pat on the two interim agreements signed by its backchannel negotiator with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Secretary Eduardo Ermita, President Macapagal-Arroyo's adviser on the peace process, said in an interview over dzBB that the dispute over the contents of the May 6 and 7 agreements was "just a matter of interpretation."

"The agreements are just three or four pages long. All it needs is for one to properly understand them," Ermita said. He also said that "if we don't look at the entire context of the agreements, we'll have different interpretations."

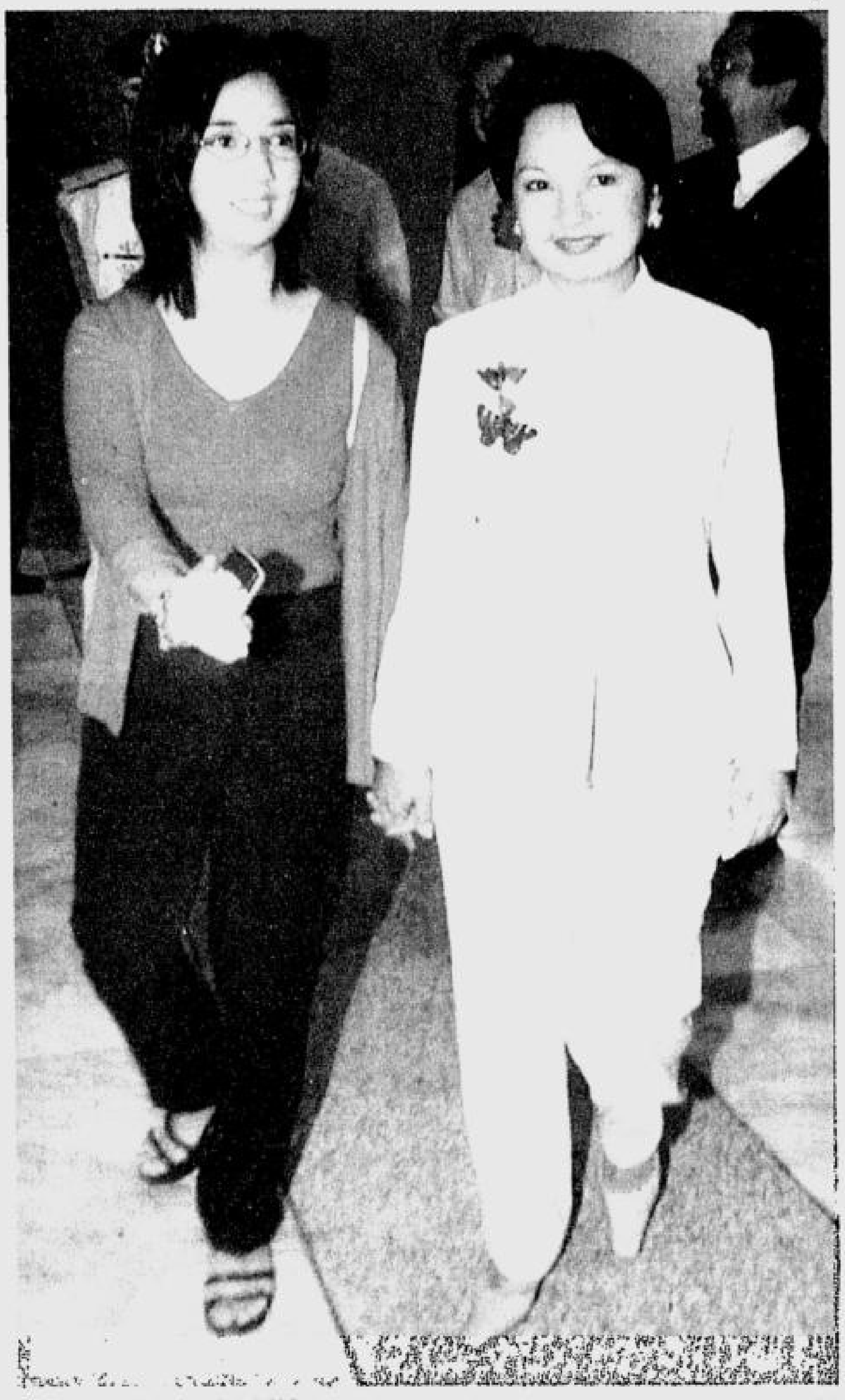
Acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable said the agreements signed in Malaysia by Norberto Gonzales, the President's adviser on special concerns, did not in any way accord the MILF the status of belligerency or recognition as a separate state.

"There is no sovereignty or territorial integrity which was surrendered by the government," Afable said in a chance interview with reporters on the arrival of the President's party from a five-day visit to Japan.

But Sen. Blas Ople warned that the President could be impeached for treason if the MILF camps recovered by the government troops in 2000 were returned to the rebels, as supposedly provided for in the agreements.

Senate Minority Floor Leader

PALACE/A19



MOM'S BACK—AGAIN JOAN BONDOC

Met by daughter Luli on her arrival on Friday from a five-day working visit to Japan, President Macapagal says she plans to go right back "because Japan is important enough to be visited at least twice a year." *(Story on Page A3.)*

Power solutions: More heat than meat

By Dona Pazzibugan,
Cynthia Balana
and Rocky Nazareno

WHAT to do with a problem like the purchased power adjustment(PPA) fee? The solutions proposed so far appear to add heat rather than meat.

Malacañang prefers that the PPA in the consumers' electricity bills be reduced rather than suspended for three years.

Her spokesperson said President Macapagal-Arroyo is sticking to her proposal to replace the PPA with a "universal charge" of P0.40 per kilowatt-hour.

The PPA currently costs P3.30/kwh, and accounts for a huge portion of the monthly electric bills.

Seventeen senators recently proposed a three-year moratorium on the PPA collection.

But opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara has proposed a "comprehensive strategy" that would bring relief to consumers by slashing the current PPA rate to P2.12/kwh.

He said that the PPA reduction should cover both the PPA of the National Power Corp.(Napacor) and

POWER/A18

DOLE job fair: New grads need not apply

By Blanche Rivera

AROUND 95 percent of job-seekers failed to meet the requirements set by companies participating in a job fair organized by the Department of Labor and Employment.

Even with 3,700 vacancies posted by some 40 companies that joined the DOLE job fair on Recto Avenue yesterday, only 2-5 percent of applicants were hired on the spot, said a member of the DOLE staff in charge of the fair.

DOLE-National Capital Region's Joy de Jesus said the companies wanted to hire experienced workers, but most of the applicants were fresh graduates—making them unqualified for the positions and leaving most of them dejected.

And while around 70 percent of the applicants were seeking employment that would give them fixed salary and benefits, most of the vacancies were in the marketing and sales industry, De Jesus said.

"We can't make everybody happy all the time. That is why we invite a variety of employers to accommodate a variety of applicants, to provide more choices," De Jesus said.

Despite the low percentage of those hired on the spot, job fairs remain the most attractive and cost-efficient way of seeking employment, said De Jesus.

DOLE/A4

NEA also blamed for PPA

By Michael Lim Ubac

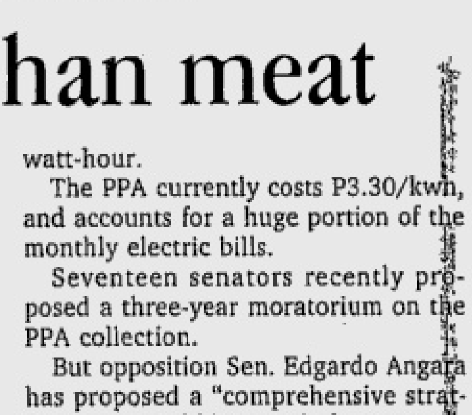
AN anti-corruption group has pointed out that excess power paid for by Metro Manila residents should have been distributed instead to the electricity-starved countryside were it not for the misdeeds of government officials of the National Electrification Administration (NEA).

The Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption asked the government yesterday to investigate the NEA which, it said, should also take the blame for higher electricity rates brought about by the purchased power adjustment (PPA) charge.

VACC chair and president Dante Jimenez said that had the agency fulfilled its mandate to provide vital additional power distribution lines to remote barangays, excess power should have flowed to the countryside rather than have its cost passed on to consumers of the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) through the PPA charge.

Jimenez disclosed that a classic example of NEA's alleged inefficiency

NEA/A18



WOW! OK 'TO... SANA MAY MENTHOL

Gulping down a nicotine fix

WASHINGTON—Nico Water—a bottled water spiked with nicotine that promises to let smokers gulp down their next fix—met with a smoldering reaction Thursday from anti-tobacco groups.

The water, scheduled to be sold in US stores from next month in packs of four bottles for about $15, is being marketed as

GULPING/A4

Blackout traced to computer glitch; 7 suspended

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SEVEN officials of the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) were suspended on Thursday for preparing and approving a System Preservation Scheme (SPS) that failed to prevent Tuesday's Luzon-wide blackout.

But according to Telly Guieb, principal engineer of Transco-Southern Luzon, Transco informed the Manila Electric Co. of abnormal signals in the power line carrier two days before the power outage.

"We let go of the problem after we informed Meralco about it," Guieb told the INQUIRER in a phone interview Thursday. He also said the power line carrier in question belonged to Meralco, contrary to earlier reports that it was Transco's.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said in a statement issued yesterday that the seven Transco officials were relieved of their duties until "the full investigation to determine accountability has been completed."

Transco president Asisclo Gonzaga requested that the names of the officials be withheld.

Perez said the initial findings of the inquiry into what caused the blackout indicated a programming bug in the SPS for the National Power Corp.'s coal plant in Calaca, Batangas.

Gonzaga said the extent of the blackout might have been minimized had the SPS at Calaca worked and isolated a problem in the Sta. Rosa-Biñan transmission line.

He said the software bug was just one factor in the massive system failure that forced the Philippine Stock Ex-

BLACKOUT/A18

Second FRONT PAGE

Roco out of VP race?

By Juliet L. Javellana

ROCO

IS EDUCATION Secretary Raul Roco in or out? Of the running, that is.

A congressman had earlier said Roco, a member of the ruling political coalition, was one of the running mates President Macapagal-Arroyo was considering for the 2004 elections.

But a member of the Lakas secretariat told the INQUIRER that Roco was now on a "long list" of 18 candidates for senator in 2004, a roster which includes Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes.

The Lakas official said in the party's "working draft," the VP slot was a tossup among Senate President Franklin Drilon, Sen. Juan Flavier, Trade Secretary Mar Roxas and Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who is being wooed back to the administration side.

Roco has lately been asking Lakas members to join his party, the Aksyon Demokratiko, the Lakas official said. He said Roco's posters could now be found in almost all schools around the country, "but you can't find any of the President's."

Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri had earlier told the INQUIRER that Roco, Drilon, Roxas, Sen. Robert Barbers, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. were among the possible Lakas VP candidates.

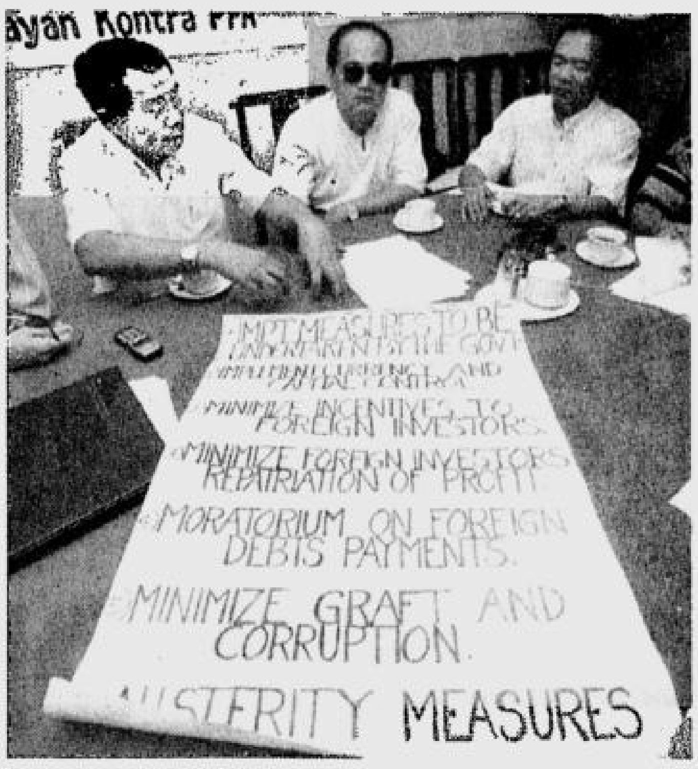
But Zubiri said De Venecia told him he had no plans of running again for a national position.

The Lakas official said the speaker was studying two options: to run for senator and become Senate President, in which case he would have his wife Gina run for his congressional seat, or to run for reelection and keep his post of speaker.

De Venecia's decision would depend on the results of the next two surveys, the official said. He added that the long list" of Lakas senatorial candidates, which would be pared to 12 for the 2004 polls, included mostly original Lakas personalities and only a few coalition allies.

He named the other probable senatorial candidates apart from Reyes as Justice Secretary Hernando "Nani" Perez, housing czar Michael Defensor, Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, Negros Occidental Rep. Jun Lozada, Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II, Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez and Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr.

Reelectionist senators Flavier, Rene Cayetano, Robert Barbers and Loren Legarda are also on the list, as well as Roco, Pimentel and former Presidential Management Staff chief Vicky Garchitorena.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CITIZENS' ACTION ERIK ARAZAS

Yet another citizens' group has come out against the purchased power adjustment (PPA) in electric bills. The Krusada Kontra Katiwalian, through members (from left) Rollie Canon, Melvin Santiago and police Chief Supt. Romulo Maganto, also demanded during a press conference yesterday that government undertake measures to stamp out corruption and boost the economy.

New witness tags Cardeño

By TJ Burgonio

ANOTHER witness, also a former military officer, has tagged Supt. Rafael Cardeño as the mastermind in the killing of government informant Baron Cervantes, police officials said yesterday.

Erlindo Torres, who surrendered to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) two weeks ago, executed an affidavit pointing to Cardeño as the brains behind Cervantes' slay.

Torres corroborated the testimonies of the alleged gunman, ex-Marine Sgt. Joseph Mostrales, and alleged getaway car driver Jaime Centeno. The two suspects were also arrested two weeks ago.

The three supposedly rode in the same vehicle before and after the fatal shooting of Cervantes on the night of Dec. 31 last year in Las Piñas City.

"With three persons pointing to him as the mastermind, we have a very strong case against Cardeño," said Supt. Erikson Velasquez, chief of the CIDG-NCR investigation division.

The three swore to their affidavits before Prosecutor Ruben Zacarias of the Department of Justice at CIDG headquarters in the presence of Rac and Carol Cervantes, the victim's parents.

Torres, Mostrales and Centeno then approached the Cervantes couple and asked for forgiveness. "We are sorry," one of them said, "we were merely used."

The couple appealed to Cardeño to face the charges against him. "We believe in the democratic process," Rac said, "and we respect his (Cardeño's) rights."

The CIDG lodged murder charges before the DOJ against Cardeño and seven others, including Torres, Mostrales and Centeno; plus Diosdado Santos alias "Dado," Rodolfo Patino alias "Bullet," Eugene Radan and Sonny Camacho.

Mitchelle Cataluna, a lady guard at the Jubelium convenient store where the shooting occurred, had identified Mostrales as the gunman. After the killing, Cardeño allegedly gave Mostrales' group P20,000.

Santos, Patino, Radan and Camacho remain at large.

Camacho was Cardeño's aide at the Land Transportation Office, where the latter worked as operations officer until October last year. Leonard de Vera, lawyer for the Cervantes' family, said the sworn affidavits showed Cardeño had ordered the killing of Cervantes at about this time.

Cardeño, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1982 and founding chair of the Young Officers' Union, has repeatedly denied any involvement in Cervantes' slay.

His lawyers have questioned the police manhunt against their client, and obtained a 72-hour temporary restraining order from the Quezon City regional trial court on Wednesday.

Yes, but is he the right man?

ZAMBOANGA CITY—"It's a nickname, *a nom d'guerre* that they are thrilled with," Maj. Gen. Glicerio Sua, chief of the 1st Tabak Infantry Division, said yesterday, referring to the arrest of another man going by the name Abu Muslim Alghazie who allegedly was behind the bombing in General Santos City.

Sua said bandits and local terrorists were fond of using certain names to mislead government troops. The military reported the capture of Alghazie a few weeks ago, but the police said the bandit had actually escaped the dragnet.

Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar lauded the arrest of Noor Mohammad Umog, alias Abu Muslim Alghazie, in Cotabato City on Wednesday.

"*Sa wakas, nahuli rin* (at last, we got him)" Akbar said, adding that Umog was the strategist of the Abu Sayyaf group based in Basilan.

Umog, the governor added, was involved in the hostage-taking of teachers, pupils and a priest in Tuburan and Sumisip towns last March 20.

A practical arts teacher at the Tandu Ahas Elementary School in Lamitan town, Umog allegedly joined the Abu Sayyaf in March 2000.

Akbar could not say if he was the real Alghazie. "But what's in a name? He is still Abu Sayyaf."

Sua agreed. "All of them should be arrested, anyway," he said. ***Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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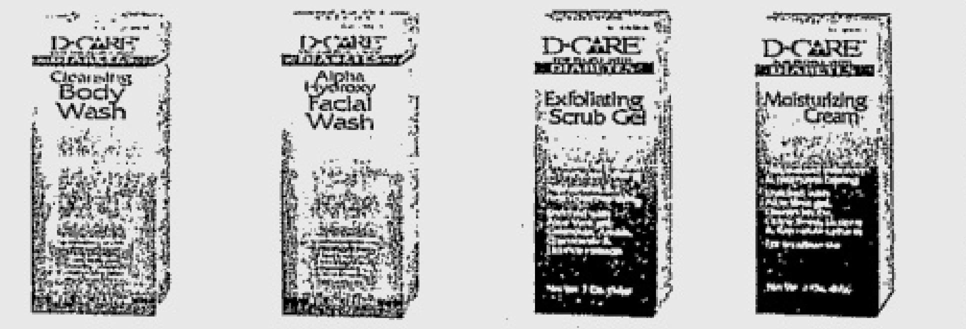
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On arrival, GMA plans next trip

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo had barely unpacked her bags from her five-day working trip to Japan when she announced plans for a next visit.

In her arrival speech at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday, the President said she was going back "because Japan is important enough to be visited at least twice a year."

She said Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad "does so all the time all these decades."

"In preparation for my next visit to Japan . . . we will be working out a poverty alleviation proposal for the Japanese to fund," Ms Macapagal said.

She said Japan gives funding for this purpose to countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan.

President Macapagal reported she had "a very spirited and very cordial" meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi where they "reinforced our bilateral relationship."

"I took the opportunity to outline my vision of the Philippine-Japan partnership of marching closely with Japan and the rest of the region consistent with Prime Minister Koizumi's view of working and advancing together for East Asia," she said.

The President said she and Koizumi agreed to have a joint study group for the forging of an economic partnership agreement (EPA) between the two countries.

She said this EPA and the EPAs of other Asean countries with Japan "are strong reinforcing elements of the trend toward East Asian economic integration."

The President said that during her meeting with the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations or Keidanren, she expressed the Philippines' readiness "to provide health care to Japan's aging citizens."

"Japan has an aging population while we have a young population with many of them health care workers and professionals," Ms Macapagal said.

The President also said Japanese ship owners assured her Filipino seamen would be given management positions in Japanese vessels upon passing a qualifying exam.

"This is one privilege which is being given to Filipinos only," she said.

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Friday, 31 May 2002 11:00AM - 9:00PM	Sunday, 2 June 2002 9:00AM - 5:00PM.
Saturday, 1 June 2002 9:00AM - 5:00PM	**Seminar:** Leyte Room, Cebu Plaza Hotel Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City 2:00PM - 3:30PM
Seminar: Camelia-Dahlia-Emilia Room Dusit Hotel Nikko Ayala Center, Makati City Friday, 31 May 2002 6:00PM - 7:30PM	*PLEASE BRING CERTIFIED TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS, DIPLOMA AND RESUME

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Universe earliest image seen for first time

From page A1

the Cosmic Background Imager (CBI) operated by the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in Pasadena.

Researchers were able to detect minute variations in the cosmic microwave background, radiation that has traveled to earth over almost 14 billion years.

A map of temperature fluctuations shows the first tentative seeds of matter and energy that would later evolve into clusters of hundreds of galaxies, according to the scientists.

The measurements provide evidence of part of the Big Bang theory—that of inflation, which speculates that the universe underwent a violent expansion in its first micro-moments.

After about 300,000 years the universe cooled enough to allow the seeds of matter to form and became "transparent," allowing light to pass through, with remnants of that energy observed by the imager.

The data also provided new information about the repulsive force called "dark energy" that appears to defy gravity and force the universe to accelerate at an ever-increasing pace.

"We have seen, for the first time, the seeds that gave rise to clusters of galaxies, thus putting theories of galaxy formation on a firm observational footing," said team leader Anthony Readhead of Caltech.

"These unique high-resolution observations provide a new set of critical tests of cosmology, and provide new and independent evidence that the universe is flat and is dominated by dark matter and dark energy," he added.

Readhead, along with Caltech colleagues Steve Padin and Timothy Pearson, plus others from Canada, Chile and the United States, worked to generate the measurements of the cosmic microwave background.

"This is basic research at its finest and most exciting," said NSF director Rita Colwell. "Each new image of the early universe refines our model of how it all began."

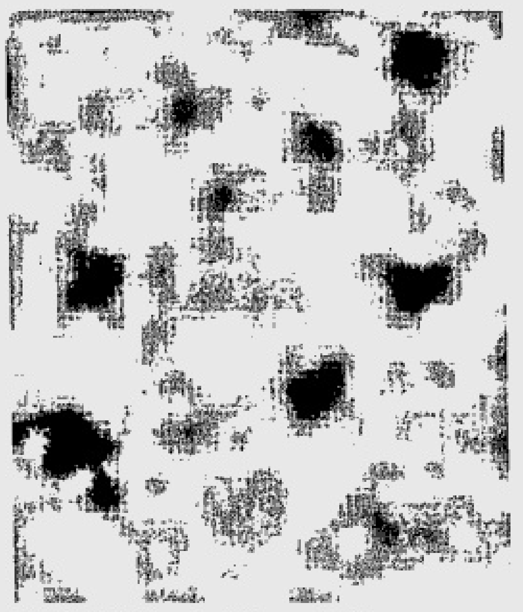
Numerous researchers believe that 95 percent of the mass of the universe is invisible, made up of 50 percent vacuum and 45 percent dark matter.

Using a far superior resolution, the CBI has been working on research begun by the US Cosmic Background Explorer (COBE) satellite which 10 years ago first highlighted evidence of fluctuations of the first light of the cosmos.

The observatory is located in the world's driest desert at Atacama, Chile some 5,080 meters (16,700 feet) above sea level. Extremely low humidity there optimises the equipment's observation capabilities.

Five papers on the CBI data were submitted Thursday to the Astrophysical Journal for publication.

AFP



SEEMINGLY out of focus, this image released May 23 by the National Science Foundation made by a scientific instrument called the Cosmic Background Imager on a remote plateau in Chile shows the most detailed image of the oldest light ever emitted.

Gulping down a nicotine fix

From page A1

a supplement to smoking.

The owner of the patent, a California-based QT5 Inc., argues that as a supplement, the product does not require approval from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

"There are 38 million smokers out there, we want to give them another choice that is easy for them to access and eliminate second-hand smoke," QT5 chief executive Steve Reder said.

His company's Internet site describes it as a "convenient nicotine beverage."

"It's a healthy breather with Nico Water that provides a refreshing break to the smoking habit and the craving for nicotine when not smoking for an hour, a day, a week or a lifetime," it boasts.

But about 20 anti-smoking groups, including Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, petitioned the FDA to step in and require pre-approval of the water before it is sold.

"Nicotine water is one of a really whole new generation of tobacco and nicotine products that are being marketed with absolutely no testing or oversight," said campaign spokesperson Danny McGoldrick.

"We think it is pretty silly that you can put a hazardous drug, and a highly addictive drug, in a bottle of water and sell it down at the corner market," he added.

"There are no absolutely no assurances that it is not going to be sold to children."

QT5's boss said he was a strong supporter of a campaign requiring buyers of nicotine products to produce proof of age.

"We truly believe in the 'We Card' system. We have badges we hand out and we have tamper-proof packs," Reder said.

Adult market only

"We are so going after the adult market for this. It is written all over the place, 'must be 18 to purchase.'"

The story caught fire after being broadcast by CNN.

On Thursday, a non-smoking anchor on the US financial news channel, CNBC, even drank the Nico Water on air to see whether it would have any effect on him.

Despite his claim to be unaffected, one viewer sent in an e-mail message complaining that his delivery had become clumsy after a bottle of the product.

"I do not smoke and I tried it. It just relaxes you," said QT5's Reder, insisting that the bottled water escaped FDA requirements.

"There is a tremendous response on this product right now," he added. "We have given it to hundreds of thousands of people. Obviously the phone has not stopped ringing."

An FDA official said the administration was reviewing the petition from anti-tobacco groups requesting that it regulate the product. No further comment was possible, the official said.

AP

DOLE job fair: New grads need not apply

From page A1

This is because job fairs give applicants more opportunities to "sell" themselves to more companies in just one location, thus saving on expenses.

Each year hundreds of thousands of graduates are joining the country's 33 million workforce. But many of them end up in the ranks of the 4.2 million unemployed people instead.

The government started organizing job fairs since the 1991 Mt. Pinatubo eruption that caused the displacement of thousands of workers in Central Luzon.

The disappointing results of yesterday's fair notwithstanding, the DOLE is sponsoring another job fair, this time on June 11 and 12 to commemorate Independence Day.

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- Regional Medical Center, Dagupan City

REGION 2
- Southern Isabela Gen. Hospital - Santiago City, Isabela
- Cagayan Valley Medical Center - Tuguegarao, Cagayan
- Veterans Regional Hospital - Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya

REGION 3
- Jose B. Lingad Memorial General Hospital - San Fernando, Pampanga
- Mariveles Mental Hospital - Mariveles, Bataan
- Bataan Provincial Hospital - Balanga, Bataan
- Dr. Paulino Garcia Memorial Research and Medical Center - Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija
- Talavera Extension Hospital (Paulino J. Garcia Memo. Res. & Med. Ctr) - Talavera, Nueva Ecija
- Bulacan Provincial Hospital - Malolos, Bulacan

REGION 4
- Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memo. Hospital - Tala, Caloocan, Metro Manila
- Quezon Memorial Hospital - Quezon Memorial Cmpd., Lucena City
- Culion Sanitarium & Balala Hospital - Culion, Palawan
- Batangas Regional Hospital - Batangas City, Batangas
- Ospital ng Palawan - Puerto Princesa, Palawan

REGION 5
- Bicol Sanitarium - Cabusan, Camarines Sur
- Bicol Medical Center - Naga City, Camarines Sur
- Don Susano Rodriguez Memorial Mental Hospital - Cadlan, Pili, Camarines Sur
- Bicol Regional Trng. and Teaching Hospital (Albay Provincial Hospital) - Legaspi City, Albay

CORDILLERA AUTONOMOUS REGION
- Conner District Hospital - Conner, Apayao
- Far North Luzon General Hospital and Training Center - Luna, Apayao
- Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center, Mental Ward - Baguio City
- Luis Hora Memorial Regional Hospital - Abatan, Bauko, Mt. Province

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
- Dr. Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Hospital - Rizal Avenue, Manila
- East Avenue Medical Center - East Avenue, Quezon City
- Rizal Medical Center - Pasig City
- Amang Rodriguez Medical Center - Marikina city
- Tondo Medical Center - Balut, Tondo, Manila
- Quirino Memorial Medical Center - Proj. 4, Quezon City
- Dr. Jose Fabella Memo. Hospital - Lope de Vega, Manila
- San Lazaro Hospital - Quiricada, Manila
- Philippine Orthopedic Hospital - Banawe, Quezon City
- National Childrens Hospital - E. Rodriguez Blvd., Quezon City
- National Center for Mental Health - Mandaluyong City
- San Lorenzo Ruiz Women's Hospital - Santolan, Malabon
- Philippine Heart Center - East Avenue, Quezon City
- Las Pinas District Hospital - Pulang Lupa, Las Pinas City
- Valenzuela General Hospital - Sec. Gen. THE. De Leon Karuhatan, Valenzuela City
- Taguig Pateros District Hospital - East Service Road, Western Bicutan, Taguig, Pateros, MM
- National Kidney and Transplant Institute - Quezon Avenue, Quezon City
- Lung Center of the Philippines - Quezon Ave., Quezon City
- Research Institute for Tropical Medicine - Alabang, Metro Manila
- Philippine Children's Medical Center - Quezon Ave., Quezon City

REGION 6
- Western Visayas Medical Center, Mental Ward - Mandurriao, Iloilo City
- Don Jose Monfort Medical Center Extension Hospital (Western Visayas Medical Center) - Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo
- Western Visayas Regional Hospital - Bacolod City, Negros Occidental
- Western Visayas Sanitarium - Sta. Barbara, Iloilo

REGION 7
- St. Anthony Mother & Child Hospital - Basak, San Nicolas, Cebu
- Talisay District Hospital - Talisay, Cebu
- Gov. Celestino Gallares Memo. Hospital, Mental Ward - Tagbilaran City, Bohol
- Don Emilio Del Valle Memorial Hospital (Gov. Celestino Gallares Memo. Hosp.) - Ubay, Bohol
- Eversly Sanitarium - Mandawe, Cebu
- Vicente Sotto Sr. Memorial Medical Center, Mental Ward - Cebu City

REGION 8
- Eastern Visayas Regional Medical, Mental Ward - Tacloban City, Leyte Del Norte
- Schistosomiasis Control & Research Hospital - Palo, Leyte Del Norte

REGION 9
- Labuan Public Hospital (Zamboanga City Medical Center) - Labuan, Zam. del Sur
- Zamboanga City Medical Center, Mental Ward - Zamboanga City, Zamboanga del Sur
- Dr. Jose Rizal Memorial Hospital - Dapitan City, Zamboanga del Norte
- Basilan General Hospital - Isabela, Basilan
- Mindanao Central Sanitarium - Pasalobong, Zamboanga City, Zamboanga del Sur
- Margosatubig Regional Hospital - Margosatubig, Zamboanga Del Norte

REGION 10
- Camiguin General Hospital - Mambajao, Camiguin
- Northern Mindanao Medical Center - Cagayan de Oro City, Misamis Oriental
- Mayor Hilarion Ramiro Sr. Regional Training & Teaching Hospital

REGION 11
- Davao Medical Center, Davao Mental Hospital - Bajada, Davao City (JP Laurel, Davao City)
- Davao Regional Hospital - Tagum, Davao Del Norte

REGION 12
- Cotabato Sanitarium - Nuling, Pinaring, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao
- Amai Pakpak Medical Center - Marawi City, Lanao Del Sur

CARAGA
- Caraga Regional Hospital - Surigao City, Surigao Del Norte
- Adela Serra Ty Memo. Med. Center - Tandag, Surigao Del Sur

AUTONOMOUS REGION OF MUSLIM MINDANAO
- Sulu Sanitarium - San Raymundo, Jolo Sulu

As of May 6, 2002

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Manila, Philippines

May 25, 2002 – Inquirer

SEC steps into failed Church venture

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission is set to intervene in the bankruptcy issue hounding CBCPNet.corp, the failed Internet venture of the Roman Catholic Church.

SEC Commissioner Jesus Martinez yesterday issued an order to summon the parties involved in the petition for the dissolution of CBCPNet, following concerns aired by investors.

In a press statement, Martinez said the meeting would determine the feasibility of appointing an interim management committee to oversee the orderly handling of CBCPNet assets, until the regular courts could come up with a definitive ruling.

Martinez clarified that the meeting was not being called to discuss dissolution, "because SEC no longer has jurisdiction over that." He said the foremost concern was asset preservation.

The meeting was set for 2 p.m. on Wednesday at the SEC office in Ortigas.

The controversy erupted two weeks ago when the CBCP cried foul over their alleged swindling by trader couple Eman and Mardie Lim. The prelates said the Lims convinced them to go into the business, and then kept them in the dark regarding operations.

The CBCP has estimated the company's current debts at P190 million, saying the venture collapsed after the couple diverted funds to the partner firm, Twins Inc.

CBCPnet, incorporated in 1999, aimed to establish affordable Internet cafés all over the country. The company was able to put up only 10 stations in various places outside Metro Manila.

There was no accounting for pre-paid Internet cards sold, it was later discovered. A spokesperson for the CBCP said there was no option left but to seek dissolution of the Internet company.

Under Philippine law, while the SEC regulates all corporations, only regular courts have the authority to order dissolution.

"We wish to make clear to all parties concerned that the involvement of SEC at this point is not to see this thing through to its financial resolution, but initially just to prevent the situation from further deteriorating, a scenario that can adversely affect the interest of investors whom we are mandated to protect," Martinez explained.

CBCP has vowed to redeem itself with another Internet venture, CBCP World, in partnership with a new group, Transpacific Broadcast Group International.

CBCP World is an Internet service provider that seeks to service 1,500 schools and 2,190 parishes nationwide. It will host chat rooms where the laity can clarify issues confronting the Catholic Church, and offer a filtering service against pornography, violence, gambling, satanism and other "dirty" websites.

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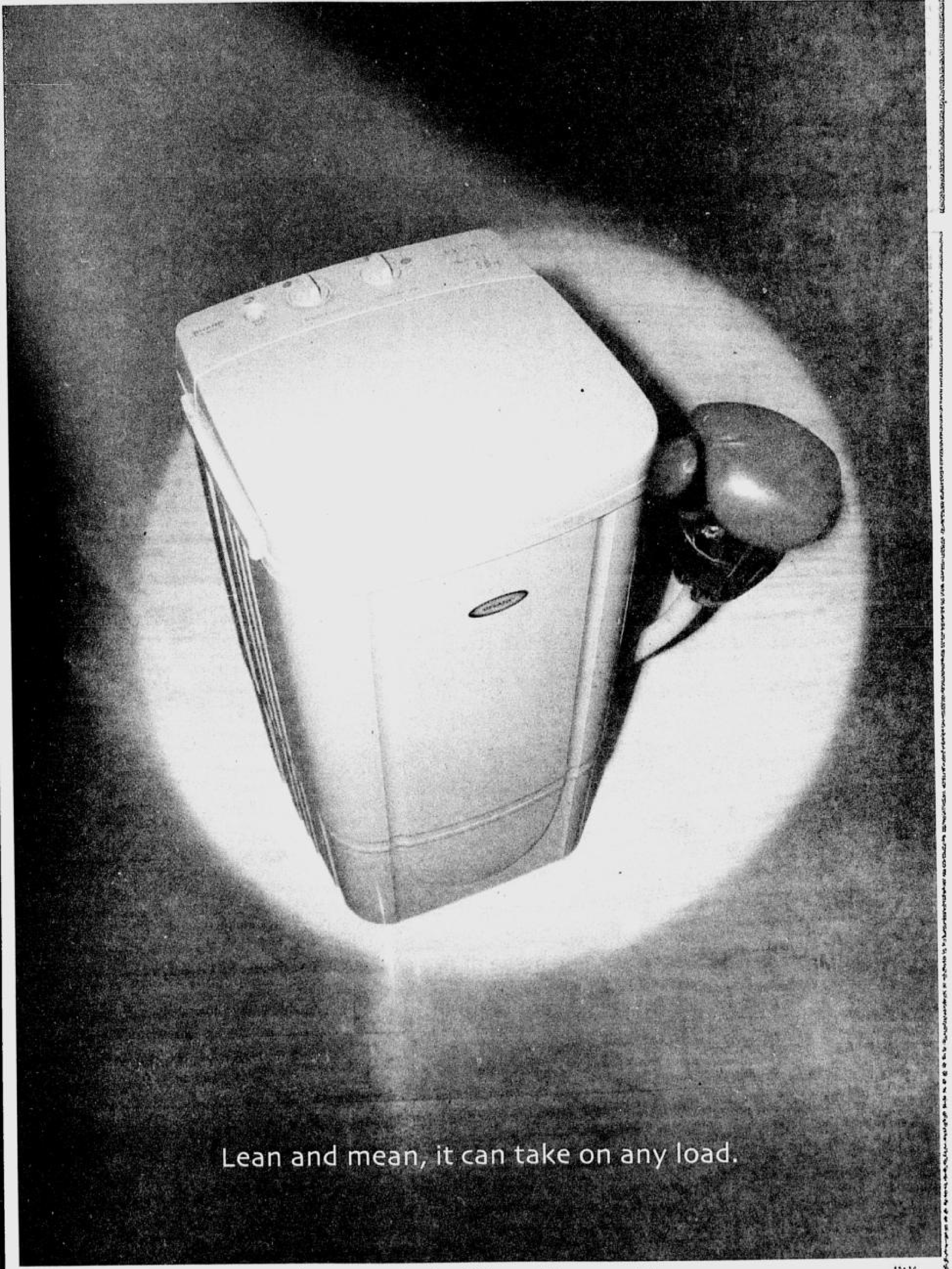

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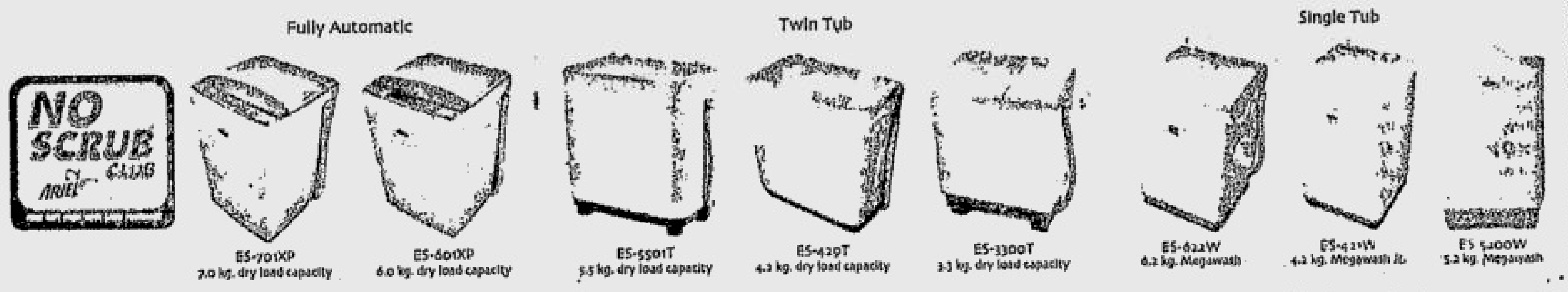
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AFP: Ediborah still a hostage despite reported marriage to Abu captor

By TJ Burgonio

THE MILITARY still considers Ediborah Yap a hostage even if she has married Abu Sayyaf chieftain Isnilon Hapilon, Col. Alexander Aleo said yesterday.

Aleo, commander of the Army's 103rd Brigade, said in a phone interview that Yap, a nurse, and Hapilon were married in Muslim rites officiated by Hapilon's father in a Basilan jungle in October last year.

"That's what the released hostages told us last year," he said, adding that Hapilon's first wife, whose name he could not remember, had corroborated this.

But Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta, chief of the military's public affairs office, was quick to downplay "these raw reports."

"We need to confirm these," Mabanta told reporters. "These are all recycled reports."

Quoting the freed hostages, Aleo said Yap had been forced to marry her captor. He said she "opted for the lesser evil" because Hapilon had threatened to subject her to gang rape if she refused.

However, Aleo added, the military still considered Yap a hostage. "We will still rescue her because in the first place she was forced into the marriage," he said.

He also said the military was looking into reports that Yap was afflicted with the "Stockholm syndrome," a condition wherein a captive sympathizes with his/her captors.

The Abu Sayyaf abducted Yap and several others from the Dr. Jose Torres Hospital in Lamitan, Basilan, on June 2, 2001.

Among that group, she is the only one still held hostage. She is said to be looking after the American missionary couple Martin and Gracia Burnham, whom the Abu Sayyaf abducted from a Palawan resort on May 27, 2001.

Aleo also said the military was also looking into a report that the Abu Sayyaf was holding the Burnhams separately.

While this has yet to be confirmed, he said, the bandits could be using this strategy for "more bargaining leverage in case one of the Burnhams is rescued."

EDIBORAH Yap is rumored to have married Abu chieftain Isnilon Hapilon.

'How much longer must we wait?'

From page A1

your families and friends have listened and watched as government and military officials have speculated on your location and physical condition. We have waited in anticipation as predictions of your release or rescue have come and gone," the letter continues.

"We know these have been incredibly long and difficult months for you. We hear reports you have had very little food, and have been forced to travel and live under very harsh conditions. You have both suffered physically and our hearts ache for you and with you. As your bodies have grown weaker, we pray your hearts have remained strong.

"Jeffrey, Melinda and Zachary love you very much, and have struggled through each new day wondering where their Dad and Mom are, how they are doing, and when they will return home to them," the letter said.

Children in US

With the assistance of the NTM crisis team, the Burnhams' three children were returned to the United States in the care of Martin's parents, Paul and Oreta Burnham. They spend time with aunts, uncles and cousins and make regular trips with the parents of Gracia, according to the NTM website.

The rest of the letter reads: "Your parents and your brothers and sisters have agonized as well, never sure how you are doing. Not a day has gone by that they haven't thought of you and prayed for you. They have written you letters and sent you pictures, and we trust you have received them and been warmed by their love and care for you," the letter said.

"You came to the Philippines 15 years ago to serve God by serving the Filipino people. You have lived in many different places, sacrificing and giving of yourselves to others. So many of those you have helped here have expressed grief over your situation. Your lives and testimony are an inspiration to all of us.

"We affirm our faith in God, knowing He is indeed sovereign over all things, including your captivity. We are confident God has sustained you both through this difficult time, and will continue to do so until you are united with your children and families.

"We want to remind you today you are not alone. From the day you were taken hostage many people have been working tirelessly to bring you home. We want you to know we will not let up until you are both safely back home with Jeffrey, Melinda, Zachary and your families."

RP military scored

The NTM scores the Philippine government for rejecting the pleas of the Burnham family members "to allow US troops to become actively involved and (rejecting) all offers of direct action by the USA. Several incidents throughout the kidnapping have raised concerns on our part regarding the effectiveness of the Philippine military."

But in Zamboanga City, Maj. Gen. Glicerio Sua, chief of Task Force Comet and of the 1st Tabak Infantry Division, stressed that the military was doing everything to rescue the hostages.

Sua said as long as the Abu Sayyaf is determined to get the ransom money, the Burnhams will remain in captivity.

"We know how hard it is for the families of the Burnhams. We don't have to be on their side to feel the pain and the misery of this situation, but we are doing our best," Sua said.

Col. Francisco Gudani, Southern Command's deputy chief for operations, said the bandits will never hurt the Burnhams, "because they are hoping to get the money."

The military has received reports that Martin Burnham was seen being carried on a stretcher; that Gracia was suffering from urinary tract infection; and that ransom had been paid but went to the wrong hands.

"These are all plain reports, there are no confirmations and these are part of the Sayyaf's psychological warfare operation," Gudani said.

Still, Gudani said, the reports were being validated. ***With a report from Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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Solons seek probe of Ford

CONGRESS has passed a resolution mandating the Department of Trade and Industry to probe the roadworthiness of Ford vehicles sold in the Philippines, after a solon's Expedition suffered mechanical failure and crashed in a freak accident.

Camiguin Rep. Jurdin Jesus M. Romualdo filed House Resolution No. 481 in March after an investigation by an expert mechanic showed "inherent mechanical defects and design flaws" in the Expedition whose steering wheel and brakes had locked for unknown reasons.

In the resolution, Romualdo also questioned the grant of fiscal perks to Ford by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority when the American car firm's factory in Laguna was producing vehicles mainly for the domestic market.

The DTI received a copy of the resolution on May 20 but has yet to act on the probe.

Ford had refused to acknowledge Romualdo's claim its Expedition was defective.

Romualdo said the DTI should look into reports Ford vehicles sold in the US have different specifications and warranties from those sold in the Philippines.

Aside from the questions of safety, Romualdo asked the DTI to review the legality of the giant car company's Peza incentives that are intended for exporters. Peza is under the DTI. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Ping wants GMA-appointed justices off case

By Michael Lim Ubac

OPPOSITION Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson yesterday asked Supreme Court Justices Renato Corona and Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez to inhibit themselves from proceedings relating to a petition to revive the Kuratong Baleleng cases.

In an urgent motion filed by his lawyers, Lacson said Corona and Martinez—both appointees of President Macapagal-Arroyo—should not participate in the final deliberations on the petition set for May 28.

Lacson said the two magistrates' participation was objectionable, stressing they did not hear the oral arguments last Feb. 19 on the petition to reopen the controversial cases since both assumed their posts only on April 12.

Lacson further charged that the revival of the murder charges against him and 37 others for the killing of 11 Kuratong Baleleng members in 1995 was part of the administration's "campaign of persecution" against him.

Earlier, Lacson had questioned Associate Justice Antonio Carpio's capacity to rule on the petition impartially, saying the latter had prejudged the case in newspaper columns he had written prior to his judicial appointment. This prompted Carpio, a former INQUIRER columnist, to inhibit himself from the Feb. 19 proceedings.

In an urgent motion for resolution last May 3, Lacson pressed the SC for an immediate ruling. He said the petition has been pending with the high court since September last year but was deemed submitted for resolution only last March 18.

Lacson told the high court he had reason to believe the delay was triggered by the appointment of Corona and Martinez to the 15-member high bench.

The SC explained the two justices filled up vacancies left by Associate Justices Bernardo Pardo and Arturo Buena.

Lacson insisted the newcomers would "tilt the balance" of votes during deliberations that supposedly took place on April 11, with only 13 justices.

He said news reporters called him on April 10 for comment on a decision to be promulgated that afternoon. The following day, he said, reporters again called him, this time for comment on reports that a decision had been rendered at 4:30 p.m., but that Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. had allowed a dissenting opinion to be submitted on April 30.

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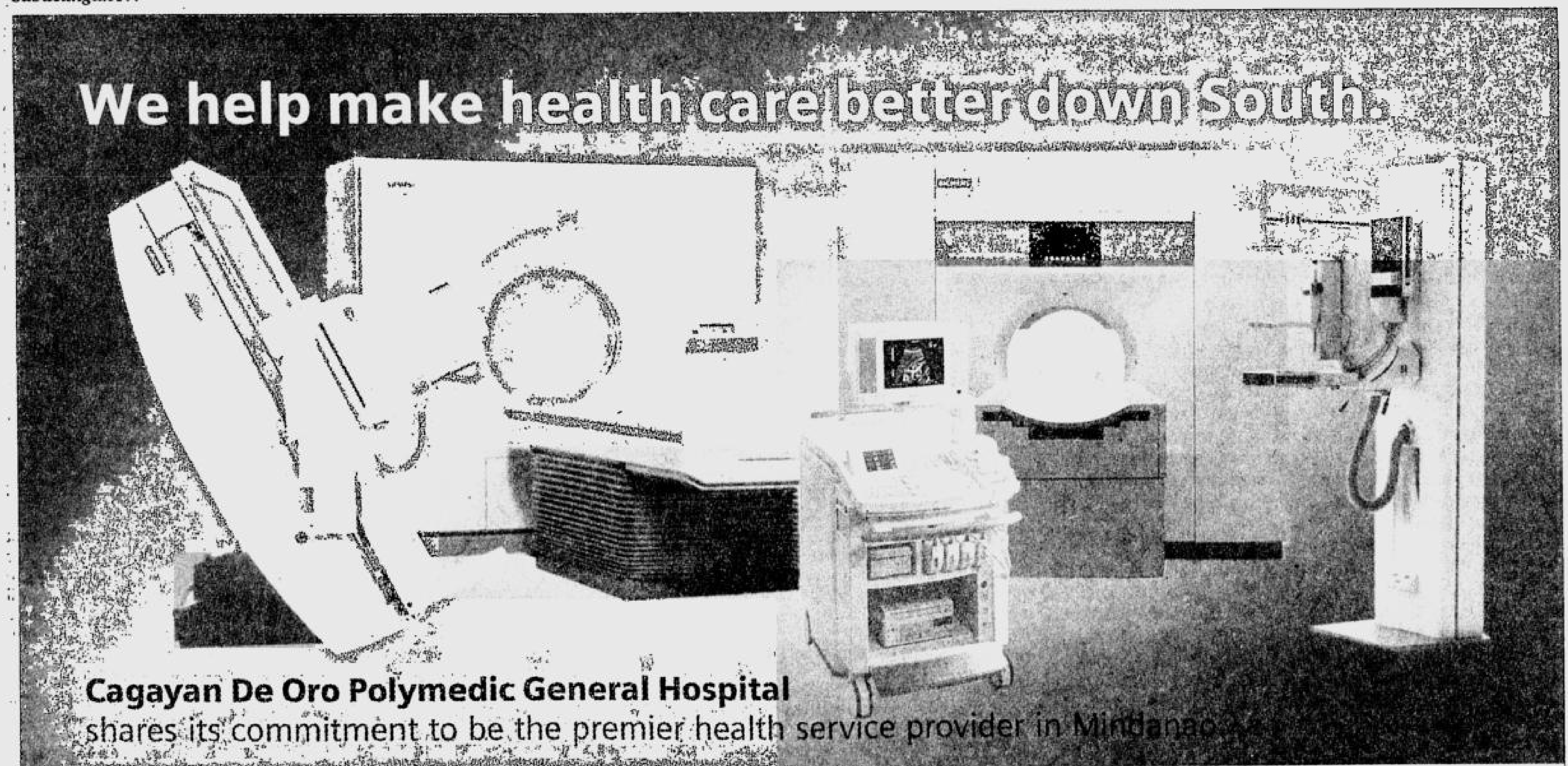
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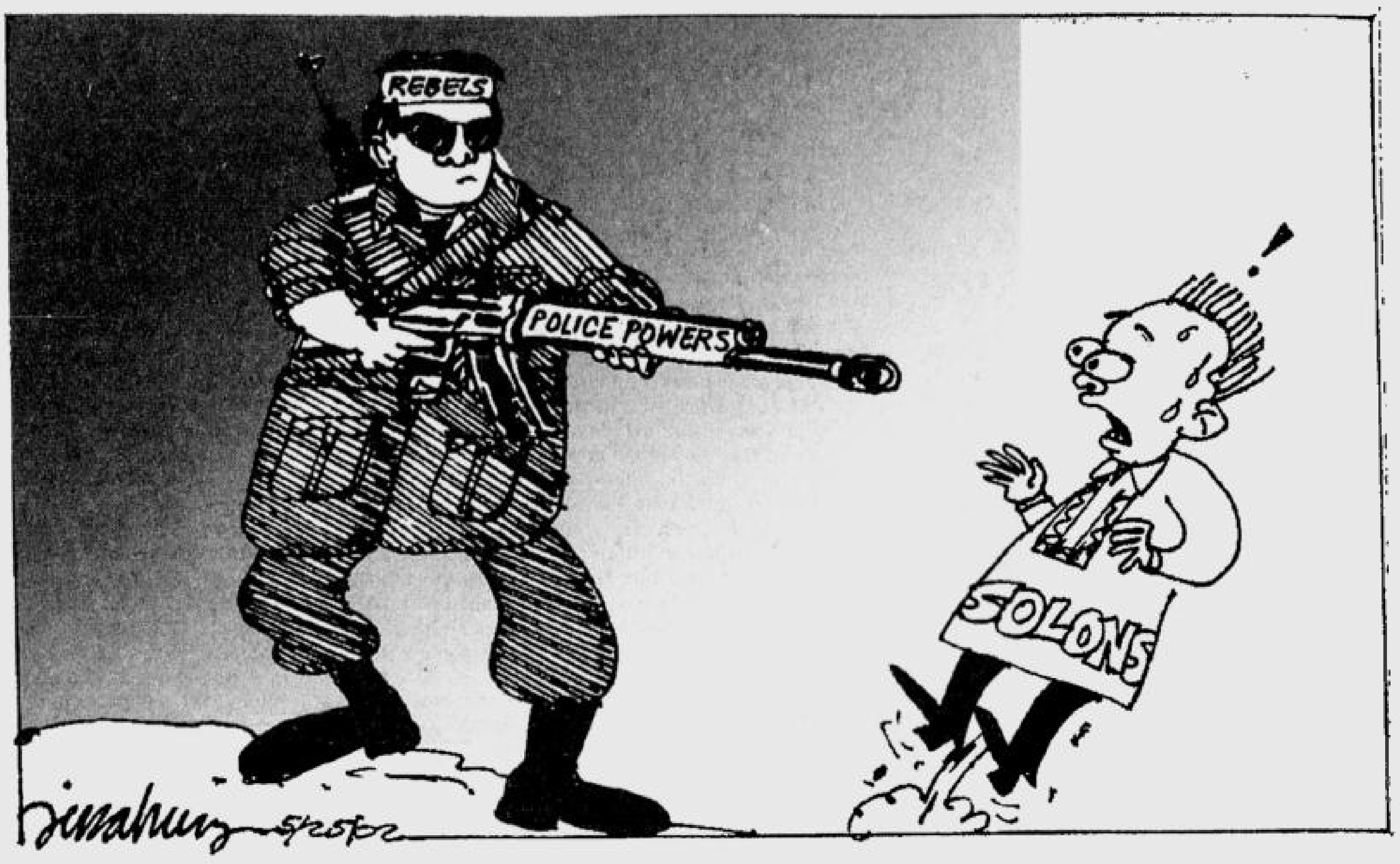


Battle of alternatives

EDITORIAL

THE OPPOSITION bill sponsored by Sen. Edgardo Angara seeking to reduce electricity costs to consumers is without doubt an alternative to the administration-backed bill of Sen. Rene Cayetano which proposes a three-year relief from the purchased power adjustment (PPA) for all residential consumers and a one-year deferment for industries.

As Angara explained in his sponsorship speech, the report of the Senate energy committee chaired by Cayetano was a "knee-jerk" response to rising public criticism of the PPA. Thus, the opposition bill offers a "comprehensive" and long-range formula, mechanisms of which are spelled out in the Angara bill, to give it a contrast to the administration's formula.

Whether or not the Cayetano committee proposal and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's suspension of the PPA charges by the National Power Corp. are "band-aid," the committee report and Angara's bill have something in common—both have a populist pitch. Both seek to identify themselves with the popular clamor to stop the spiral of electricity costs.

Both the opposition and administration senators are really competing to offer the public a cheaper electricity deal. There's a positive aspect in this competition. The opposition offers an alternative that should be examined seriously to determine whether it has a better plan than the administration. This competition over proposals lifts the level of discourse in the Senate to choices or alternatives away from the previous preoccupation for inquisitorial investigations which are not really the main function of the legislature.

If there is, indeed, a shift toward presentation of alternatives rather than using the Senate as an arena to attack and destroy, then the power costs issue may be seen as a catalyst of a new and more positive sign of legislative emphasis.

Having noted this shift, we may now examine the Angara proposal to determine if it has something new to offer to improve the committee's report which has all the hallmarks of improvisation.

The Angara proposal argues that the Cayetano committee report does not lower significantly the consumers' monthly electricity bill. It points out that the committee proposal provides for tiered Napocor stranded costs, depending upon consumption: the first 50 kilowatt hours would be exempt from the universal charges correspondent to the stranded contract costs; the second 50 kWh would be charged at 21 centavos per kWh; and consumption above 100 kWh could be charged 42 centavos per kWh.

It further notes that the proposal places a cap on the recovery of the stranded contract costs at 42 centavos per kWh. It suspends the collection of the Napocor's power purchase cost adjustment for three years and one year for industrial and commercial users. It requires the distribution utility to reduce its PPA corresponding to the reduction in and suspension of stranded costs. The Angara bill argues these measures are inadequate. It notes that the suspension of the collection of the PPCA will provide short-term relief but consumers will find themselves paying for these costs over the amortization period of 15 to 25 years. It points out that the Cayetano proposal is silent on the obligation of distribution utilities—like Meralco—to reduce their own PPA. The proposal, it is argued, translates to a reduction of total PPA of only 73 centavos per kWh.

So, how is Angara's alternative any better? In general, the alternative seeks to prevent power generators and distributors from passing on the costs of their "inefficiency, mistakes and questionable onerous contracts they have entered into" to the end-users. The features of this alternative include: distribution utilities will be allowed to charge stranded costs to end-users as part of the universal charge, but not more than 23 centavos per kWh. Distribution utilities—like Meralco—will only be allowed to collect a maximum of 23 centavos per kWh for their PPA. This translates to a reduction of P1.20 per kWh in the PPA of Meralco.

More telling are the proposals to spur competition and promote efficiency among utility distributors. The opposition bill seeks to exclude costs and items that should not be charged by the utilities to the consumers, including income tax, franchise tax and working capital. These changes would translate, according to their calculations, to a reduction in the PPA of P2.12 per kwh, from P3.30 to P1.18 per kWh.

In this competition of alternatives, the ball is in the Senate majority's court. This is a challenge to Cayetano to come up with something better.

Church v. State

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

THE SEPARATION of Church and State was the subject of heated debate among the founding fathers before it was finally affirmed with a margin of only one vote in the Malolos Constitution. It was reproduced without much discussion in the 1935 and 1973 Constitutions and is now made more emphatic with the new provision in Art. II, Sec. 6 of the 1987 charter that "the separation of Church and State shall be inviolable."

The basic guaranty is now found in Art. III, Sec. 5, which repeats the familiar rule that:

"No law shall be made respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed. No religious test shall be required for the exercise of civil or political rights."

Religion may be defined as "any specific system of belief, worship, conduct, etc., often involving a code of ethics and a philosophy." The existence of a Divine Being is not necessarily inherent in religion although our Supreme Court has described it as "a profession of faith to an active power that binds and elevates man to his Creator." The Buddhists, for example, merely espouse a way of life without reference to an omnipotent God. Mere belief in *karma*, or destiny, is a religion notwithstanding the absence of an Almighty to direct it.

Religious freedom connotes not only a person's right to believe in whatever divinity appeals to his reverence but also a rejection of a hereafter or the supremacy of a supernatural person with powers over life and death. One man's religion may instruct him that there is a God while another's may tell him there is no God. Both of them, under the Constitution, are entitled to their respective beliefs. In other words, religion embraces matters of faith and dogma as well as doubt, agnosticism and atheism. The right to worship includes the right not to worship.

The rationale of the separation of Church and State is summed up in the familiar maxim, "Strong fences make good neighbors." The purpose is to delineate the boundaries between the two institutions and thus avoid encroachments by one upon the other because of a misunderstanding of the limits of their respective jurisdictions. The demarcation line calls on the entities to "render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."

As commonly understood, the doctrine applies only to the State, which is prohibited from establishing a church, appropriating funds to aid one religion, some religions or all religions, punishing persons for attending or not attending a church, taxing a purely religious function or event, or doing any other similar act curtailing a person's right of religious profession and worship. The doctrine forbids "sponsorship, financial support and active involvement of the sovereign in religious activity" or its "excessive entanglement with religion."

But the principle cuts both ways. In this country, in fact, the problem is not so much the interference of the State in Church affairs as the interference of the Church in State affairs. This is a dangerous virus emasculating our democracy. The Church used to confine itself to saving souls, but this is no longer true in this materialistic age. The different so-called religious groups that have cropped up lately have become a powerful political force so strong as to be able—some for a fee—to dictate the outcome of any election.

Proof of this is the overwhelming victory of Joseph Estrada in 1998 with the support of the Iglesia ni Cristo and El Shaddai, most of whose following are from the *bakya* crowd. That combination of mostly unthinking voters was hardly a spiritual force because their common candidate could not pretend to be a virtuous person. He was known widely as a drinker and gambler with a stable of paramours, let alone his dubious integrity. Yet many of them trooped to the polls at the command of their high priests to vote for Erap.

Another proof of the sinister influence of the religious groups in secular affairs is the docile tribute paid them by many political leaders. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo herself has attended a rally of the El Shaddai, her erstwhile antagonist, in an obvious pitch for 2004. Candidates have paid similar obeisance to that group—and the INC as well—also in hopes of its political support. At the same time, they have also affirmed their loyalties to the vote-rich Catholic Church, whose moral standards are decidedly higher...

The justification for the active involvement in political matters of running priests, bellicose nuns, lay leaders, religious evangelists, and those fire-breathing doomsayers whose votes are available for a price, is that they are entitled as citizens to participate in political affairs. True enough. But they have that right only if they do not vote robot-like at the command of scheming masters in cahoots with paying candidates. Regardless of their religion, responsible citizens exercise their suffrages of their own free will and according only to the bidding of their conscience.

Our Constitution does not allow the Commission on Elections to register religious denominations and sects as political parties. Nevertheless, some of these groups are actually practicing, not religion, but politics in derogation of the separation of Church and State. They are scorning the doctrine under the guise—or disguise—of citizenship, but the politicians dare not do anything about it.

Why is electricity costly, really?

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

THE SENATE and the House are engaged in a race to pass their respective bills amending the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (RA 9163). Not only that, they are vying to show how much they "care" for the end-users, particularly the poor.

As a result, an extraordinary amount of one-upmanship is taking place. If one proposal is to exempt "marginalized" end-users consuming at most 75 kilowatt-hours a month from the so-called "universal charge," another proposal broadens the coverage to those consuming up to 100 kWh. If one proposes a one-year moratorium on the collection of the National Power Corp.'s purchased power cost adjustments or PPCA, another will extend the moratorium to three years. Still another proposal will impose a moratorium not only on the PPCA charges, but also on the universal charge.

The latest player in the game is Sen. Edgardo Angara, who seems to have trumped everybody else—with a proposal to cap the universal charge to 23 centavos or almost one-half of what the President originally proposed. The other legislators are going to find it hard to overtrump him.

There are other players than our legislators and the President, of course. Those associated with the Left who will accept nothing less than the total abolition of Napocor's PPCA and Meralco's purchased power adjustment (PPA). For them the moratoria, ceilings and exemptions proposed by the legislators are insufficient. And then there are those, mostly from the Estrada camp, who oppose the bills for no other reason than that these were certified urgent by Malacañang.

On top of the media spectacle, the public is confused with terms that legislators themselves don't really seem to be familiar with—stranded costs, universal charges, PPA, PPCA. RA 9136 has a glossary of 56 terms that are defined, but not including PPA and PPCA (perhaps because the law applies to a deregulated industry where these terms will no longer exist). Unfortunately, the amendatory bills from the Senate and the House do not bother to define these terms either.

In all the confusion, in all the hurry, it is very easy to lose sight of the main issue: the very high cost of electricity. The Philippines has the dubious distinction of having the third highest—behind Japan and Hong Kong—power rates in Asia.

Initially, public ire was centered on Meralco, which was the collector of the PPCA/PPA, because it makes for a large and easy target. It is the country's largest distribution utility, serving 20 percent of the population, accounting for 60 percent of total electricity sales, and operating in an area which contributes 50 percent of our GDP.

But it eventually became clear, at least to many, that they may be barking up the wrong tree. Distribution costs account for only 13 percent of total electricity costs, with 83 percent of every peso that is paid by the end user going toward generation and transmission.

The angry attention shifted to the Napocor. And when the public realized that a large part of the high electricity costs was because they were also paying for electricity which was not being generated—thanks to the "minimum offtake" or the take-or-pay provisions of the Napocor's (and Meralco's) contracts with the independent power producers (IPPs)—there were howls of outrage. To make matters worse, there were accusations that not only were these IPP contracts onerous, but that many (15, according to Rep. Etta Rosales) had been signed even after a World Bank study recommended that they were no longer needed.

And that's where matters stand at the moment—the legislators with their bills, and their "investigations in aid of legislation" of the IPPs, with their moratoria and exemptions and ceilings, and the leftists and the Estrada loyalists with their calls for the scrapping of the PPA.

But now the almost-lost issue must be faced: will any of these moves really result in lowering the electricity costs to the consumers? The answer, unfortunately, is that while they may seem to do so in the short-run, they will only hurt the consumers more in the long-term.

The move to scrap the PPA is like throwing out the baby with the bath water. Only part of the PPA is attributable to the take-or-pay provisions with the IPPs. The remaining portion covers changes in fuel costs and in foreign exchange rates, which are related to the electricity they actually consume. Neither should all the IPPs be lumped together as having acted in bad faith. Plus, there is the probability of an investment backlash, which would result in future power shortages and higher electricity bills.

The House and Senate bills do not even address the inequities of the PPCA. They accept the charges as a given—they will merely stretch out payments for up to 25 years. While this may reduce our electricity bill today, in the long run, the consumers will be paying more, because of the financing charges. Those familiar with installment plan purchases know that they are effectively paying a higher, not a lower, price for the products they buy on credit. Furthermore, because the consumers feel no pain in the beginning and will not complain, there will be no incentive for either the Napocor or its successor (PSALM) to seriously work at reducing costs. Our children and grandchildren will end up paying for the costly electricity that we are consuming today.

Juan and Juana de la Cruz would do well to beware of politicians—from the administration and the opposition, from the Right and the Left—bearing gifts.

GMA impresses foreign correspondents in Tokyo

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SEN. John Osmeña does not look kindly at former President Ramos' disclosure that he will appear before a Senate hearing only if it is conducted jointly by the committees on energy chaired by Sen. Rene Cayetano and on public corporations and public enterprises chaired by Osmeña. The latter has concluded that FVR is scared to appear before his committee without Cayetano, his former legal assistant, to protect him. In fact, Osmeña called FVR a "coward" for refusing to appear exclusively before his committee, stressing that if FVR insists on the joint hearing, he would withdraw his invitation.

Senate President Frank Drilon has ruled that Ramos will be heard by the two committees, inasmuch as Cayetano had filed a bill seeking the lowering of the purchased power adjustment (PPA) being charged by the independent power producers (IPP) with whom the Ramos administration had forged contracts, while Osmeña's invitation to FVR would zero in on those contracts. Frankly, it seems quite sensible that the two committees hear him out simultaneously, as this saves time and effort; besides, joint hearings have been the rule in many issues in the Senate. But Osmeña, who has never been secretive about his disdain for FVR, has rejected this idea and in fact he has asked Cayetano to inhibit himself from the hearings because of his past association with FVR. Osmeña does have a point there, but since Cayetano's energy committee will be the lead committee, the latter will chair the hearing; this means that Osmeña will have a hard time channeling it to his particular agenda. Cayetano would refuse to inhibit himself.

* * *

My Tokyo-based daughter Christine, a member of the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan (FCCJ), attended the lunch last Tuesday wherein President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo spoke before a packed audience of some 200 paying financial journalists, finance professionals and Philippine observers in Tokyo. She e-mailed this report:

"In contrast to many other professionals' luncheons at this esteemed club, many FCCJ old-timers observed an unusually heavy turnout for GMA's luncheon speech. Some speculated that the interest in the Philippines had to do with the recent reversal of the decision of California Pension Fund, the largest US pension fund, to remove its investments in the Philippines; the recent good performance of the Philippine stock market and US military presence in the Philippines. In addition, there have been several favorable articles on the management style of the Macapagal administration in international financial publications recently.

"At the start, all eyes were on the pint-sized leader at the presidential table, as she spoke in Taglish on her cellular phone. 'She looks so young and cute but fierce,' one journalist gasped. 'She looks like she just finished college but at the same time she looks like a fire-horse who could whip a whole army into place with one stare.'

"GMA clearly impressed most of the audience with her crisp and professional delivery of remarks and her clear, razor-sharp responses to questions. Most of the audience were used to interviewing or listening to major world leaders and figures from history in that very room, so that the fact that they were impressed with GMA's performance was not insignificant. It helped, too, that most of them had not observed the teleprompter discreetly placed by GMA's left-hand side, so they were in awe at her seemingly extemporaneous delivery.

"The Japanese were appreciative of the support and faith GMA showed toward Japan and its government. Her strong statement that 'I have no doubt that Japan will be able to recover from its recession' raised a few skeptical eyebrows since its government has been caught in a quagmire for the past 10 years and there is no end in sight to its woes. However, many others were pleased. 'I think it's great that she has shown such firm support for Japan,' said Keiichi Miki, president of JP Morgan Fleming Asset Management and an avid Philippine supporter. 'She certainly is a leader who is not afraid to take a stand. She is exactly the kind of President the Philippines needs right now.'

"Another statement that pleased the Japanese was GMA's affirmation that she had come to Japan not to ask for more ODA support but to thank Japan for maintaining the level of its ODA support in the Philippines. Many Japanese feel that ODA is largely unappreciated in many developing countries, so that GMA's statement made them feel good. 'Finance professionals were also very impressed with her clear grasp of economic issues.'"

* * *

The Grand Old Man of Sta. Ana, Manila, former Rep. Pablo Ocampo, celebrated his 78th birthday recently with a big party for his friends and relatives (no politicians) at the sprawling gardens of his lovely home by the Pasig River, behind the Sta. Ana Church. The delicious spicy buffet fare was cooked by his wife, Gloria, and around to help him celebrate were his children, led by his political heir, former Rep. Sandy Ocampo. With his signature all-white outfit and his incredibly trim and healthy look, Pabling put to shame many of his younger guests at the dancing that followed. I queried him and Gloria on political plans and they disclosed that Sandy is going to run again for her old seat. Against incumbent Rep. Mark Jimenez? The Ocampos said that they heard that MJ had said that if it's against Sandy, he won't run. At any rate, said Pabling, even if MJ runs, Sandy will be ready for him. She had a good record in those nine years in the House, says the father admiringly; besides, *"ang sipag ng batang 'yan mangampanya."*

Questionable DepEd policy

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT'S amazing the things you learn on out-of-town trips. Just the other day, I was in Naga City to talk in a symposium on domestic violence and afterwards, local women leaders and supporters of Abanse!Pinay joined me in a dinner hosted by Badette Roco, wife of Rep. Cho Roco, the former city mayor.

After dinner, in a free-flowing discussion, one of the women, the principal of a public elementary school, shared the many problems she and other officials face in managing their schools. The root of the problem, she said, is the Department of Education policy that gives district superintendents full discretion to distribute funds as they see fit. The main office takes care of disbursing the salaries of teachers and other school personnel, while the city government provides additional funds through the local school board. But for their construction, maintenance, purchasing and other needs, school principals must wait for the largesse and hope for the goodwill of the district supervisor who can, if he or she chooses, lavish funds on one school while starving another.

"That's why we're reduced to begging for money from our district heads," complained the principal. In her school they must cope with broken-down chairs, rickety typewriters and "two reams of bond paper, one short and one long" which must be made to last for an entire school year. But visit the district office, she said, and you'll find the education bureaucrats there lounging on leather armchairs amid luxurious surroundings.

Together with other public school principals, she has already petitioned DepEd Secretary Raul Roco to rectify the situation, for starters by providing guidelines to district supervisors on how the management funds are to be disbursed. So far, she says, the department has yet to reply to them or act on the matter.

* * *

AMONG THE GUESTS at the dinner, and the only male, was Naga City Mayor Jess Robredo, Ramon Magsaysay Awardee for public service, who inspired hope in the future of local governance by his innovative, groundbreaking and ultimately successful run as mayor.

At the end of his third term, Robredo defied most people's expectations and instead of running for another office, chose to go for further studies in the United States. Today, Robredo is back in his old stomping grounds and it seems obvious he relishes being back in the thick of the action in Naga.

Among the innovations Robredo ushered was the involvement of NGOs and community and civic leaders in crafting policies and programs, "empowerment" that other local executives give lip service to but never actually get around to implementing. It's a principle the people of Naga have embraced enthusiastically.

To illustrate, the symposium on domestic violence where I was resource person was organized by the City Social Welfare and Development Office, together with Cadenet, a network of civil society groups, and CCD-Ateneo de Naga University. In attendance was a mixed group of barangay officials, representatives of community and people's organizations, women's groups, government agencies including the Philippine National Police, and teachers.

Through more than three hours of lively discussions, we debated on the causes of all forms of violence against women, how best to address the problem, and how men and women could work through their differences. Truly a fruitful and rich dialogue!

* * *

SPEAKING of empowerment, CCI Asia Television, the creator of Lakbay TV, which promotes domestic tourism and the natural wonders of this land, recently hosted cocktails (in the midst of the Luzon-wide power outage) to update the public on its two newest cable channels—Isla, the Advocacy Channel, and Juice, an urban youth lifestyle channel.

Though operating for only four months, Isla and Juice, said CCI chair Caloy Abrera, have perked the interest of local and international viewers and content marketers.

Unfortunately, the cable operator I subscribe to has yet to air Isla and Juice, though I understand negotiations are underway. For now, you can catch Isla and Juice on Destiny Cable and Dream, while Isla is also carried on Home Cable, Sunvision, Cebu Cablelink, and other local provincial carriers. Viewers in Guam and Saipan can also access both channels via The Manila Channel while negotiations are also underway with other cable operators in North America, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

* * *

JUDGING from the promo clips they aired, the people behind Isla and Juice are both technically savvy and attuned to what captures the passions and persuasions of Filipinos, especially the young.

Isla, in particular, sounds truly promising, with a whole range of concerns covered in their line-up of program titles. Among them are: Teknika, featuring stories about business and livelihood projects that are "sensible, sustainable, appropriate and ecologically friendly;" Komunidad, features on communities engaged in socio-economic and other such projects; Medika, on health-related advocacies and alternative health; Ekolohiya, on environmental concerns; Kultura, on artifacts and practices that "define the Filipino;" Pangarap (Dream), stories on coping and surviving; Newsbreak on TV, a broadcast version of the investigative magazine; Ulat ng Bayan, factoids from the latest socio-economic surveys of Pulse Asia; and Specials, timely reports about creative initiatives across sectors.

Will Isla and Juice be able to break through the forest of commercialization that has kept local TV a wasteland? Watch and learn.

The Pahiyas of Lukban

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

LUKBAN is a picturesque small town beautifully set on the slopes of the lush Sierra Madre mountain range on the northeast side of Laguna de Bay. Fruit-bearing trees, flowering vines, bushes and grass of different hues provide an attractive sight for tired city eyes. The town may be handicapped by the lack of plains but the forests and the lake must have made up for this as you don't see abject poverty in the town.

Despite the awesome summer temperatures, water from its taps is icy cold, indicative of its origin from crystal-clear springs in the mountains. It's Amorsolo country with emerald green foliage as backdrop, willowy bamboos, delicate ferns growing wild, coconut groves and incredibly blue skies overhead. Mang Ben was invited to judge a fashion show of unusual native materials, one of the events in the Pahiyas fiesta, on the invitation of the vice mayor and had somehow managed to include the rest of us.

A tablet in the *municipio* marks the coming of the Spaniards as 1578, seven years after Juan de Salcedo first explored the province of Laguna. The Franciscans must have followed soon (they first arrived in the PI in 1577) and built a stone church and convent, faint traces of which remain. What has definitely persisted is the celebration of the feast of San Isidro Labrador, patron saint of the farmers, in that spectacular celebration of life called Pahiyas.

Carnival gaiety invests the fiesta in Lukban with the traditional cocoa leaf-shaped *kiping*, clustered in bunches or strung together in mobiles of pink, yellow, red and green. *Kiping*, I'm told, is made out of rice flour and soaked in vegetable coloring and yes, it is edible. The flour is shaped, steamed and when done the *kiping* separates from its leaf mold and becomes brittle. This decoration of nature's bounty that covers the façade of houses in Lukban is known as *pahiyas*, hence the title of the fiesta.

Together with the towns of Lucena and Sariaya, on May 15 Lukban celebrated the feast of San Isidro with garlands of bananas, clusters of pineapples, green mangoes, betel nut and other products of the earth covering every square inch of the façade of houses in the street where the procession and parade passed.

As part of the afternoon celebrations, the *gigantes* were trotted out, dipping, bowing and dancing. (These figures I am informed, are generally related to the town fiestas in June and August but were perhaps brought in as an added attraction together with a sort of Flores de Mayo and a fashion show of town belles wearing gowns of native materials not usually associated with dresses such as nipa.) They joined the procession that started at the tiny plaza and winded through the narrow main and side streets of this lush and sparkling town at the foot of magical Mt. Banahaw, marking the exuberant festivities as joyful as any ancient rites.

The *gigantes* are literally giants, about 14-ft tall and they come as a pair. *Ang mag-asawa*, the couple; the man clad in *camisachino* and his giant wife in checkered *patadiong at kimona*, the fiesta garb of country folk. The *gigantes* are papier-mâché figures mounted on light bamboo framework animated by men carrying and propelling them. There may be other giant figures in other town fiestas but if so, these are mere copies of the original ones of Lucban.

Aside from the procession and the parade there was the *tiangge* as well to entertain the visitors and spread some wealth. Who can resist sizzling hot pink straw hats or bright purple ones all for P20? Everywhere you looked were visitors wearing strikingly bright-coloured headgear that could rival Ascot. The plants in the stalls were fantastic: huge *dapos* selling for P600 (for that size it's more than double the price in Manila), all manner and color of Bromeliads that apparently are being planted in flower farms on the slopes of the mountains, a fantastic variety of orchids so fat and healthy I actually counted one with eight flowering stalks. (All things considered, it's amazing that it's the airport in Singapore that's got that orchid garden in its center when it's the Philippines that's got the species, the variety and the number but obviously not the imagination or the will to do anything about them. Or maybe just lousy airport managers from time immemorial.)

The houses where the parade passed were decorated and doors opened to strangers who wanted to try the local delicacies. One of the members of our group raved about the small pastel-colored *puto* (Ricky commented that it tasted like chiffon cake) that complemented the *dinuguan* of chicken innards. Then there was the *tulingan* cooked in a little water with slivers of ginger and *camias* and afterwards sautéed in coconut milk and mustard leaves. I loved the *tahuri* dressing for a salad of boiled eggplant, string beans and *okra*, not to mention the now famous Lukban *pancit* with the special *miki* of the town.

For *kakanin* there were *hojaldres* and *apa* and *camachile* sticks, familiar to those who grew up before the invasion of fast foods, enough to induce a feeling of nostalgia for those by-gone days of childhood.

All the way back to the city in the dark highway were processions winding down, lit by the flickering candles of the faithful observing the traditional fiestas of May.

Macho I love yous

YOUNGBLOOD

Maya Flaminda Javellana Vandenbroeck

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

THIS is for all the girls who have never been kissed, never been touched, no boyfriends, nothing. This is for all the girls accused of having hearts of stone. They include the *mahirap maabot* and the *mahilig magpakipot*. You secretly delight in men's existence because they make you feel so special, don't you? You're just too proud to admit it! Don't fret, I am not going to expose your boring love lives. I am not that cruel. I am here to warn you ice queens of the new millennium who have hearts that are whole... still. Don't succumb to the charms of the typical macho Filipino!

Tell me honestly, who wants a boyfriend who calls females "chicks"? A boyfriend who thinks he is complimenting you by saying you should join a beauty contest because "*sayang ang* beauty *mo*"? A boyfriend who asks you every hour where you are and tells you what to wear? A boyfriend who reacts in disbelief, nay, contempt, upon the discovery that "his" girl carried a 20-kilo backpack up Mount Apo or that "his" girl is a black belter in Taekwondo? A boyfriend who insists on paying the bill even if you were the one who asked him out? Worse, a boyfriend who reeks of San Miguel and Marlboro because he can't live without them?

Ladies, meet the typical macho Filipino who always wants to be stronger, bigger, faster, smarter, taller and older. He is such a pretentious prick on the outside but inside he can be like delicious jelly (sometimes). He doesn't mind looking foolish slugging your tiny black Gucci bag. (Isn't that cute?) In a country where PDA (public display of affection) is still largely frowned upon, carrying a girl's bag is the ultimate gesture of possession. We don't need to witness couples exchanging sticky French kisses to understand that.

The typical macho Filipino opens doors for you like a real gentleman (uh, security guard). He lets you take your seat first in a crowded jeepney and tingles in the anticipation of your shoulder touching his, your hand on his knees, your hair brushing his face and what else. He steals kisses in the dark but never in school, at the market or in church, and especially not in front of your parents. He purposefully walks on the left side of the road, and if you don't mind, with a protective arm around you to prevent you from being run over by traffic.

The typical macho Filipino is also very creative, (to a certain extent). He scrounges the Internet for poems he doesn't even understand himself. These he incorporates in mushy love letters that he secretly inserts in your books when you aren't looking. They are declarations of love he nonchalantly claims to be the author of for he doesn't know that plagiarism is a crime. It is not very unique but the effort is impressive. (What did you expect? A picnic on the moon?) To impress you some more, he sends you text messages quoted from Pablo Neruda: "I want 2 eat ur lips lyk a pis of almond!" Or, "I dnt knw any odr way of lovin u bt dis. One n w/c der s no I or U. It s so intimate dat ur hand upon my chest s my hand, dat wen I fal aslip, it s ur eyes dat clos." Pardon my poor translation but Spanish is so much more romantic. Who wouldn't swoon over someone who calls you his "*amanda mia*"? (But when you ask him to translate two simple sentences, he doesn't reply! The farce!)

Did you know that Filipinos, aside from the French and the Italians, are one of the world's biggest "I-love-you-ers"? It's just hearsay about the other nationalities but gosh, Filipinos do like to say "I love you" a lot. Ask any girl. The expression has become so over-used that it has almost become a cliché.

I hate to shatter your illusions, but guys? Most of the time, they only mean half of what they say. Good thing we girls are smarter and won't fall for their gibberish. Remember, God created Eve because she felt that Adam was too dull. And, it is a fact that females live longer (need I elaborate?).

Lately I have been going to Venue a lot to accompany a *kababata* from Holland who is here to learn Filipino. Also called the Netherlands, Holland is that tiny tulip and cheese country lying perilously below sea level and protected by a complicated network of dikes and dams. It is the country of marijuana, homosexual marriages and euthanasia, moralists like to jest. It is also the country of the lowest abortion rate, by the way.

My *kababata* who has been immersed in Filipino culture for one month now, says that in more liberated Holland, it takes at least a year before a guy tells a girl that he loves her. Sure, just like in the movies, they think nothing of necking and petting and torrid kissing and sex. But who would have thought that those are only the prerequisites to saying "I love you" (according to my friend)? Strange people, the Dutch. Here, it is *baliktad*. Guys think they have to say "I love you" over and over again. (That is sooo important. Makes me think of Destiny Child's "Brown Eyes": "I know that he loves me 'cause he told me so...") Then there is the list of things he feels he has to do. He showers her with gifts of perfume, imported chocolates and jewelry (can't he be more original?). He takes her out on expensive dinners in De Bonte Koe, Mount Fuji, or Picobello (with his parents' money of course). He fetches her and brings her to wherever she wants (except his room). Guys, don't assume that by giving her three red roses a week, she'll be yours to keep.

Courtship? Relationships? You could call it a test. Only when the girl is sure of his everlasting love will she take the risk of doing "it" with him. The problem is that in his excitement and haste, he forgets to use protection. Nine months later...oops! As Drew Barrymore thoughtfully puts it in "Riding in Cars with Boys,": "Life is really just a couple of days which determines the rest of it."

Back to the original point of this discussion. While Filipino men find it easy to say "I love you," the Dutch dread it. They avoid it like the plague.

Uttering those three words is like proposing marriage, my friend explains. In Holland *kasi*, guys fear the pain of rejection that's why when he likes you he just says so. "'I really, really like you. I want to be with you.' 'I love you' is such a big word," she says. How true. Just because we are pretty, beautiful, gorgeous and stunning don't mean that you can tell us "I love you" and then expect us to love you in return. How can you say that when you don't even know how we like to drink our coffee? How can you say that when you don't even know our dreams, our insecurities or what makes us laugh and cry? You probably love us just because we look sexy in high heels and minis. Just because we look cute when we flash that Close Up smile. Just because others desire us.

All this talk about males and their pathetic attempts at romance makes me want to write something about typical Filipinas (take note: not "macho"). For starters, I will write about Filipinas like myself who won't say, "I love you," when by "love" I mean, "I love the full moon" or, "I love Jollibee." When I say "I love you," I will really mean it. And, it won't be just an ordinary "I love you." No, no more macho I love yous.

Maya Flaminda Javellana Vandenbroeck, 20, is a Communication Arts graduate of the Ateneo de Davao University.

Difference between SSS and GSIS

THIS is in reference to the letter of Andy Gutierrez last April 22, 2002. Gutierrez complained that the benefits of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) are higher compared with those of the Social Security System (SSS).

Even though the SSS and GSIS provide social security protection to their members—the SSS for private sector employees and the GSIS for civil servants—the two institutions are dissimilar in so many ways.

The SSS administers solely a social insurance program. The contributions of its members are pooled. It adheres to the concept in which the rich subsidize the poor, the healthy subsidize the sick and the young subsidize the old.

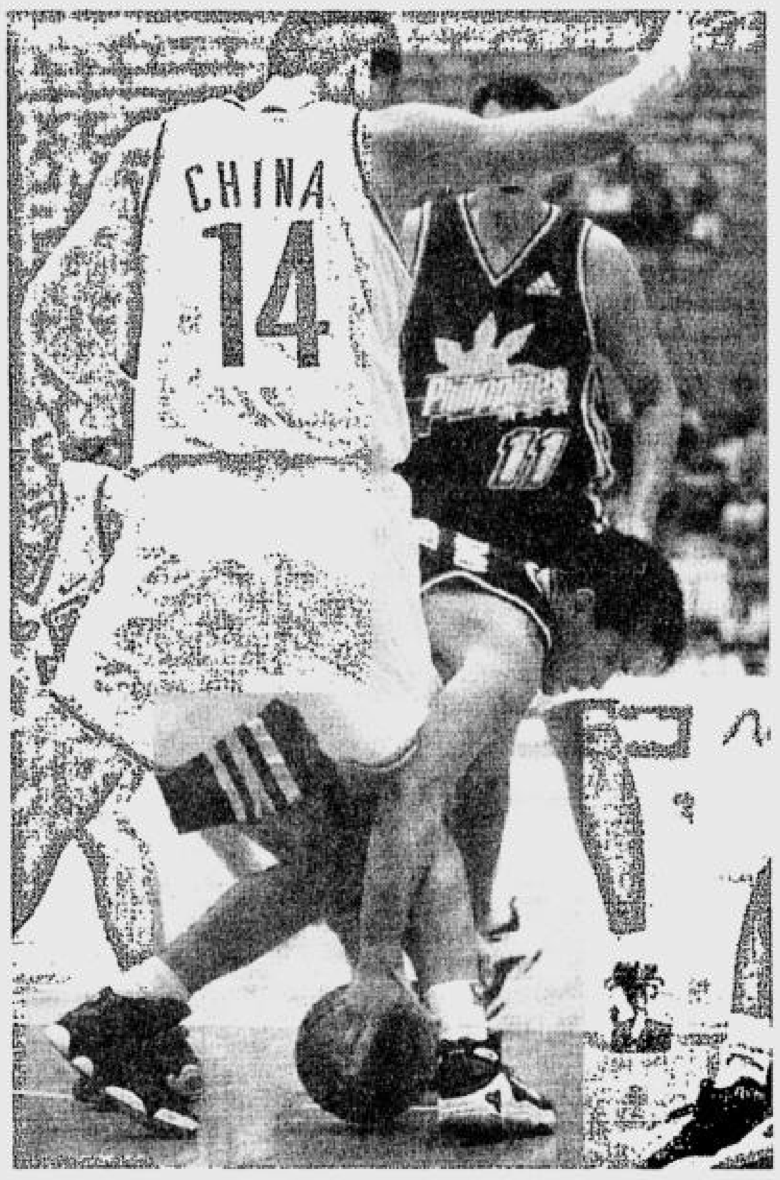
The GSIS operates a general insurance program. Apart from social security benefits, it also provides life insurance to its members. Dividends given to its members are taken from the matured value of the life insurance policies of its members. The GSIS also grants accident and vehicle insurance and issues government bonds.

SSS loans are a privilege granted to members. It is not part of the SSS' mandate. Under the law, the SSS is mandated to provide maternity, sickness, disability, funeral and death benefits to its members.

The GSIS' 21-percent contribution rate enables it to support higher benefits and loans compared with those of the SSS, which collects only 3.36 percent from the monthly salary of its members (employer's share is 5.04 percent for a total of 8.4 percent). The GSIS is also empowered to raise its contribution ceiling annually, which makes it possible to provide higher salary loans.

—JOEL P. PALACIOS, assistant vice president, Media Affairs Department, Social Security System, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

We need EJ Fiehl for the Asian Games



WE are a basketball-crazy nation and basketball is a tall man's game. In the coming Asian Games in Seoul, China has the strongest and tallest team. China at present has three tall players, Batere Menk at 6'11", Wang Zhi Zhi at 7 feet and Yao Ming at 7'5". I don't understand why coach Jong Uichico did not pick 7'1" E. J. Fiehl, our only 7 footer. Fiehl is a bit slow and in the Philippine Basketball Association, smaller players run rings around him, but in the last Asian Games he performed spectacularly in defense against the tall players of China.

If Uichico could review the tapes of the last Asian Games, he will see for himself that Fiehl was able to check and limit the points of China's two centers. Menk only scored 5 points and Zhi Zhi only scored 7 points, while Fiehl himself scored 6 points for the Philippine team and grabbed many rebounds. Zhi Zhi is the most valuable player in the Chinese Basketball Association and during their last championship game, he scored 40 points for his team. In our game against China, the smaller, fast-breaking players of China were the ones who beat us, but we were the only team that gave the Chinese a good fight—they only beat us by 12 points. All the other teams were blown away by China.

In our first game against Kazakhstan, the Kazakhs were so intimidated by Fiehl that whenever he was inside the court, they never drove for the goal, instead they tried long shots and we beat the Kazakhs handily. In our second game against the Kazakhs for third place, coach Tim Cone used a small team and Fiehl was not used. The Kazakhs made a lot of points under the goal and nearly beat us. In our game against Korea, Cone again played a small team against the Koreans and we were blown away. Fiehl was never used. The Korean center standing 6'10" made mincemeat of the smaller Marlou Aquino and Andy Siegel, and scored at will under the basket. He would have had a tough time scoring under the goal if Fiehl was there since Fiehl is taller and has very long arms. Apparently since we are used to small players, we don't understand the intimidating factor of a 7-foot player.

Aquino should also be included in our team. The problem with Aquino is his lack of patriotism. During an interview before the last Asian Games, he said he did not want to play for the country because he might get injured and lose his livelihood. However, the manager of his team forced him to join the national team. This time he made sure that he will not be picked by immediately picking a quarrel with Uichico during the start of the tryouts. Aquino even plays lackadaisically for his team in the PBA. He is content with just plodding along and collecting his salary.

Our biggest player in the next Asian Games is Asi Taulava and he is much smaller than the three centers of China. Once these Chinese players are able to position themselves under the goal, we will be defenseless. We need Fiehl to plug the center to stop these tall centers of China and the tall centers of the other countries. We also need fast, big guards and forwards who can stop the fastbreaks of the forwards and guards of China who stand 6'5" to 6'7" as well as the fast-breaking Koreans (though the Koreans are smaller). I urge Uichico to review the tapes of the last Asian Games and Jones Cup prior to the coming Asian Games to see how effective Fiehl is in international competitions. Unless we have a tall team, we will be lucky to end up sixth in the coming Asian Games.

—RICO XERES, Eisenhower Street, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila

Worried about a local arms business

THIS is in reference to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's issuance of Executive Order No. 95 on April 18, 2002. This executive order opens the Philippine weapons manufacturing industry to foreign ownership under the condition that "a substantial portion of the output" will be sold for export. EO 95 also means to encourage foreign arms manufacturers to enter into joint-venture agreements with local firms to manufacture these armaments. The executive order also includes the production of more technologically ambitious weaponry, i.e., guided missiles, aircraft, space vehicles and their components, air, land and naval combat vehicles, weapons repair and maintenance equipment, military communications equipment and night vision equipment. This executive order took effect immediately although no foreign manufacturers have yet taken advantage of it. Malacañang also denied that it was related to the Balikatan exercises, insisting that the executive order will increase exports and provide employment to a market that the country has not tapped yet.

These reasons, though they may be seen as "practical" and "economically profitable," once again overlook the real need of our people for authentic development and peace. All through these days, we have been subjected to so much violence nationwide and worldwide (call it "terrorism" or "counterterrorism"). Notice the many local police reports we see in the television and the newspaper, or the atrocities we hear over the radio. Violence threatens our families and us. We do not need to be reminded that the only way to peace is peace. To step into the guns and ammunition business is to court more disaster and to hasten the decay of our already threatened moral fiber. Let us heed the prophet's call to beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks. May it be that one nation will not raise a sword against another, nor our people to be trained for war again! (Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3)

—MA. MARICEL S. IBITA, Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation, Sta. Teresa Avila Bldg., 25 Acacia St., New Manila, Quezon City

Wake-up calls for the Aglipayan faithful

I BELIEVE that the leaders and members of the nationalist and pro-labor Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) or Aglipayan Church would join me in sincerely thanking Alfredo S. Velasco Jr. for his letter, "The decline of the Aglipayan Church" (PDI, 5/15/02) and Ryan Josef Calauor for his article, "Aglipayan irony." (PDI, 11/17/01) Their opinions are "wake-up calls" to the faithful and especially to the leaders of our church. Such criticism is a timely call for us to what God has commanded us to "do justice, kindness and love, and to walk humbly with our God" (Micah 6:8), and to unite our people for genuine emancipation in the midst of growing foreign intervention.

We, however, deplore exaggerated opinions and speculations that intend to enrage our peace-loving members and foment religious hatred that are contrary to the will of Christ. Velasco's comment manifests a chauvinistic, arrogant view of the IFI and a black propaganda devoid of logical reasoning and proper research.

The IFI has survived from a century of dreadful persecutions perpetuated by the US colonial government and the (institutional and missionary) churches in the Philippines. In the beginning the IFI was even pictured by the US invaders and the Roman Catholic Church as "the church that died before it was born." Thanks be to God Almighty, today, the IFI claims a 6 million-strong membership constituting the base of our 700 parishes and thousands of mission chapels. These include our congregations in the United States, Canada, Hong Kong and Macau. From our theological formation, we have established two theological seminaries. The IFI young people who want to become dedicated priests of our church are always welcome at the St. Andrew's Theological Seminary in Quezon City. At our very best, we have sustained our nationalist and pro-labor heritage by steadfastly journeying with the Filipino people in their struggle for justice, peace and abundant life. At least, we can count on the support of patriotic individuals in the legislative, judicial and executive bodies in the government.

The IFI is still waiting for justice. The IFI's rightful place in the history of the Filipino people must be earned. This recognition will be given to us by the people themselves from whom the IFI has drawn her power and strength. On Aug. 2-3, 2002, during the centenary of our church, we will reiterate our demand for justice not only for the rightful recognition of our first Supreme Bishop Gregorio Aglipay as a national hero and the Aglipayan Church as an integral part of the 1896 Revolution and the 1899 Filipino-American War but also for justice to the Filipino people who, for a century of steadfast struggle, have not found justice from the "free market" globalization and imperialist aggression.

—REV. DIONITO M. CABILLAS, Iglesia Filipina Independiente, 1500 Taft Ave., Ermita, Manila

Duty to answer letters and the like

IT is a good thing that Civil Service Commission chair Karina Constantino-David commented publicly on Republic Act 6713, specifically Rule 6, Section 5 of this law. That particular provision, which is more honored in the breach than in the observance, states that: "Written requests, petitions or motions sent by means of letters, telegrams or the like must be acted upon within fifteen (15) days from receipt thereof."

The CSC chair regretted "that many government agencies are still unaware of the provisions of the law and of their duties to the public." Indeed, I can imagine that waste boxes in many government offices are always half-full of unanswered/discarded letters from the public, especially those from the poor and the obscure.

We hope the CSC commissioner will do what ought to be done to resolve this pernicious problem. Coming as she does from a goodly heritage (she is the daughter of a worthy father), David may prove to be the real hope of the helpless letter senders. If she will agree, the first step could be to write the heads of government offices and corporations and remind them that their families' needs (food, shelter, clothing, etc.) are subsidized partly by the public whose letters and requests they have always ignored. This might prick their conscience.

—JESUS NATANAUAN, Barangay I Talisay, Batangas 4220

Suspicious coincidences in Subic

ELLEN Aguilar's explanation (Letters, 5/20/02) for her presence in the court which released the Ever Rich Transshipment employees would only be believable when taken alone.

But the presence of "General" Babot Gregorio during the raid, Mike Pusing's calls to the media or the ensuing text messages about the "drug bust that never was" were all too suspicious to be just coincidental.

The event happened on the eve of Sankyu Seiki's inauguration in the Subic Freeport. Remember the barricades that closed the gates when Juken Sangyo was inaugurated more than a year ago which was attended by hundreds of Japanese visitors who flew in from Tokyo? These things just seem to happen when there are big and positive events in Subic.

The only thing wrong is that some people do not seem to want them to happen. But even their scheming has not and cannot stop Subic's progress.

—REYNALDO M. GARCIA, media relations office, SBMA, Subic Bay Freeport Zone

US seen as slow to act in South Asia crisis

NEWS ANALYSIS

Carol Giacomont

WASHINGTON—Faced with ominous new war rumblings from nuclear-capable India and Pakistan, the United States seems to be approaching the problem with a band-aid when a more urgent and long-term strategy is needed, analysts say.

Like last December when South Asia tensions reached a fever pitch, the Bush administration is maintaining close contacts with both governments and has laid plans to send a top official to the region on a temper-calming mission.

But analysts say a quicker, more intensive and more long-term US response is needed from US President George W. Bush if the tinderbox conflict on the subcontinent is to be not only defused but resolved.

Any such deep involvement by Bush in another intractable foreign crisis, after he became enmeshed in Afghanistan and the Middle East, goes against the grain for a president who campaigned on keeping Washington out of international quagmires.

But analysts say urgent US action is essential.

"The idea that two weeks from now or whatever is a fine time for (Deputy Secretary of State Richard) Armitage to go out there strikes me as more laid back than the situation calls for," said Teresita Schaffer, South Asia director at the Center for Security and International Studies.

Stephen Cohen, the Brookings Institution South Asia expert, agreed, but stressed that before Armitage undertakes his mission the administration must have "ideas" to promote.

"The United States doesn't have a South Asia policy except to urge our friends to be nice. That's not a policy. Hope is not a policy," said Cohen, author of "India: Emerging Power."

The Sept. 11 attacks forced a greater US involvement in South Asia as Washington waged war in Afghanistan and enlisted Pakistan and India as allies in the anti-terror campaign.

But hopes that a common cause against terrorism might also spur South Asia peacemaking were dashed when an attack last December on India's parliament—blamed by New Delhi on Pakistan-based Islamic militants—provoked a massive buildup of troops on either side of the feuding states' border.

Now India is enraged by another attack on an army camp last week which it blames on the militants, who are fighting to end Indian rule in the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.

Despite US pressure, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's pledge to rein in the militants has fallen short.

Musharraf must adopt a "sustained policy of verifiable action (against the militants) because they now threaten both Musharraf and India...by carrying the war into India and creating circumstances to justify an Indian military attack on Pakistan," said Husain Haqqani, a former Pakistani ambassador now with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

The threat of a war that could zoom from conventional to nuclear and undermine US anti-terrorism efforts has forced Washington to be involved, despite President Bush's wariness.

Powell made the last major senior-level US diplomatic push on a visit to the region in January. Since then, he has kept in touch with Indian and Pakistani leaders by telephone.

But as the crisis worsened it was Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca, who is not considered an administration heavy hitter, who made three trips to the region since March.

This contrasts with former President Bill Clinton who assigned one of his administration stars, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, to deal with the crisis resulting after India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons in 1998.

Clinton himself intervened directly when India and Pakistan were at war in the Kargil region of Kashmir in 1999.

Bangladeshi Foreign Minister M. Morshed Khan, on a visit to Washington, on Thursday urged Bush to act. "I would like a much higher level visit to the area," he told reporters, suggesting Powell or Bush himself should go.

Experts agree the Bush team is appropriately trying first to calm tensions and urge the two sides, hobbled by weak leaders and domestic political pressures, to draw down forces.

Washington hopes it can persuade Musharraf to clamp down more convincingly on militants before India attacks.

But experts say the United States is hampered in its approach because senior officials are preoccupied with the Mideast crisis and the overall war on terrorism, in which Pakistan is playing a key role, and because few of them really know South Asia well.

One complication involves a growing interest in a robust US-India weapons trade as a byproduct of improving ties. The United States urged Israel to defer selling arms like the Arrow missile defense system to India to avoid inflaming tensions with Pakistan but is under pressure to let the deal go forward.

Although US involvement does not guarantee peace, a sustained US-backed peace process dealing with key issues like Kashmir and nuclear arms, is essential said Shaffer, a former US envoy to Sri Lanka.

Unlike Pakistan, India has long refused outside "mediation" on Kashmir but has warmed to a US role, as long as it is not called "mediation."

While US officials dispute it, Cohen said Bush has "regressed" from a Clinton view asserting the inviolability of the line of control separating Indian and Pakistani forces in Kashmir.

He said Bush should reassert it, thus sending a warning to both India and Pakistan and setting a marker encouraging acceptance of the line as Kashmir's permanent boundary.

Other elements of a comprehensive policy would have the United States push Musharraf to move quickly toward civilian rule, including appointing a civilian as chief executive and naming a new army chief, as well as offering more economic aid to Pakistan, including major funding for education, he said.

Reuters

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Bush, Putin to sign disarmament pact

PUTIN and Bush at the Kremlin May 24. AFP

MOSCOW—US President George W. Bush and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin meet Friday at a summit in Moscow to sign a historic treaty cutting nuclear arsenals and shaping a 21st-century partnership for countries once bitter foes.

Bush arrived late Thursday in the Russian capital amid high security for the Kremlin summit due to showcase the inking of a deal reducing each side's number of warheads by two thirds to between 1,700 and 2,200 over the next decade.

The fifth meeting between Bush and Putin on Friday will also see the two leaders clinch a new strategic partnership accord effectively drawing a line under the mutual suspicion and nuclear rivalry of the Cold War era.

However, even as they toast the new treaty and partnership accord, Bush and Putin were expected to grapple with a number of issues that pose a tough test of the evolving US-Russian relationship.

Moscow is eager to secure Russia's entry into the World Trade Organization, and to attract greater US investment in its economy as well as cooperation with the United States in exporting Caspian Sea oil.

Putin is also expected to press the US president for assurances that an agreement 10 days ago to give Russia an unprecedented voice within Nato is only the first step in Moscow's integration within the Alliance.

At the same time Bush is likely to seek guarantees on the control of Russian nuclear technology, which some Pentagon hawks fear could easily slip into the hands of terrorists or help Iran, Iraq or North Korea to develop nuclear weapons.

Media coverage of the Bush-Putin summit is expected to focus on disarmament, the fight against terrorism in the wake of Sept. 11 and strategic security, but Putin hopes the summit will also have a tangible economic payoff.

The Kremlin boss is looking for Bush to help Russia gain the status of a free-market economy entitling it to US trade benefits a decade after the fall of the Soviet Union.

"The United States is a key partner for (Russian) investments and trade agreements. The economy will be a key topic" at the summit, Putin told a meeting of top entrepreneurs on the eve of the summit.

Discussion of Russia's hoped-for market economy status would be "an important item on the agenda," Putin added. *AFP*

Israeli foils fourth suicide attack in week

JERUSALEM—A Palestinian attacker blew himself up outside a nightclub in Tel Aviv early Friday in the fourth suicide attack since Sunday, as the Middle East slid back toward its desperate cycle of violence.

Israeli troops meanwhile made a brief incursion into Gaza City, destroying three factories.

The latest attack came less than 24 hours after a suicide bomber sent to avenge the death of a Palestinian militant chief killed in Beirut hit Rishon Letsion, a Tel Aviv suburb rocked by a human bomb only two weeks ago.

Israel Army radio said a security guard working at the Columbarian nightclub in Tel Aviv noticed a suspicious car moving toward the entrance of the club and opened fire on the driver, causing a huge explosion.

The Palestinian was killed and two bystanders were injured, one lightly to moderately and the other suffering from shock, the radio said.

Israel public radio said the guard had shouted at the clubbers standing in the street to lie on the ground, then had opened fire on the car.

It was not initially clear whether the Palestinian detonated a charge he was wearing or whether the car was loaded with explosives which went off when the guard opened fire.

Meanwhile Israeli troops staged an incursion into Gaza City early on Friday, destroying three factories before they pulled out, Palestinian security sources and witnesses said.

Several Israeli tanks and jeeps moved more than two kilometers into Palestinian territory, targeting factories in the industrial zone of Zeitoun in the south of Gaza City, security sources said.

During the incursion troops laid explosive charges in a metal factory, a fiberglass factory and a timber production facility, completely destroying the three structures, local witnesses said. *AFP*

Police want to quiz Condit again on Levy

WASHINGTON—Authorities investigating the death of Chandra Levy, the 24-year-old Washington intern whose disappearance more than a year ago ended the career of US Rep. Gary Condit in a cloud of scandal, said Thursday they want to question Condit again.

Meanwhile, investigators continued to comb the wooded area where Levy's body was found Wednesday and examined her remains in search of clues.

Police have said Condit is not a suspect, but Chief Charles Ramsey said "perhaps there may be a need to talk again" with the lawmaker.

The married Condit admitted having an affair with Levy, but has denied any role in her disappearance. He already has been questioned several times by police and provided DNA samples for comparison tests.

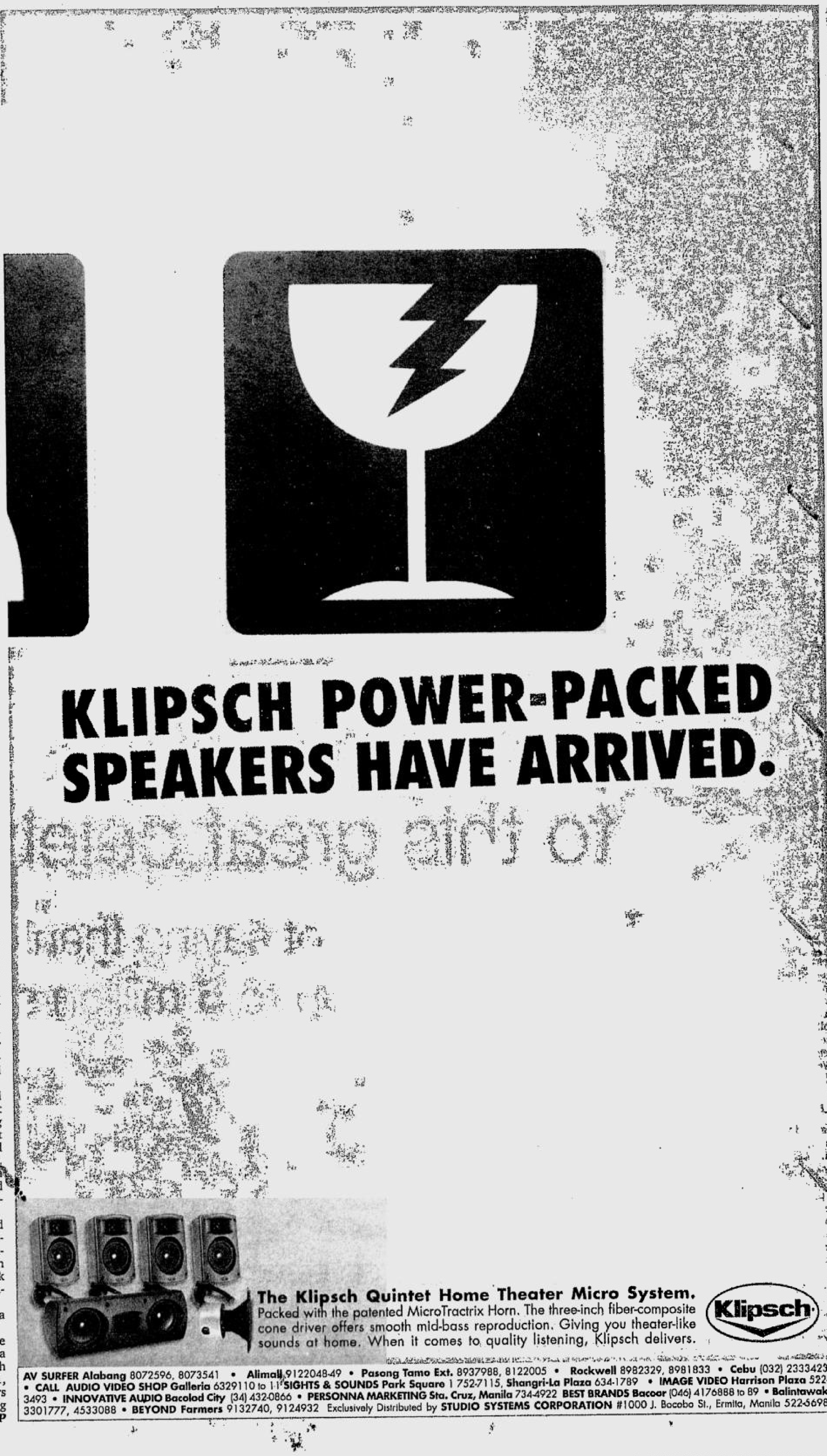
Meanwhile, US Park Police said they had arrested a 20-year-old Washington man last summer for two knife-point attacks on young female joggers in the park, including one that took place two weeks after Levy disappeared near the spot where her remains were found.

The man, Ingmar Guandeque, is serving a 10-year prison sentence after being convicted of assault and attempted robbery in connection with the two other incidents.

Ramsey said Fox News investigators talked to Guandeque months ago after US Park Police alerted them to the arrest. "He said nothing to implicate himself with her, but then again we didn't know she was in Rock Creek Park," Ramsey said. He cautioned against calling the man a suspect.

Police probably will interview Guandeque a second time, Ramsey told Fox News.

Levy came here to serve as an intern at the Bureau of Prisons and disappeared without a trace May 1, 2001. The ensuing police search for her dominated headlines until Sept. 11, when suicide attacks with hijacked airliners killed some 3,000 people, dramatically taking public focus off the story. *AFP*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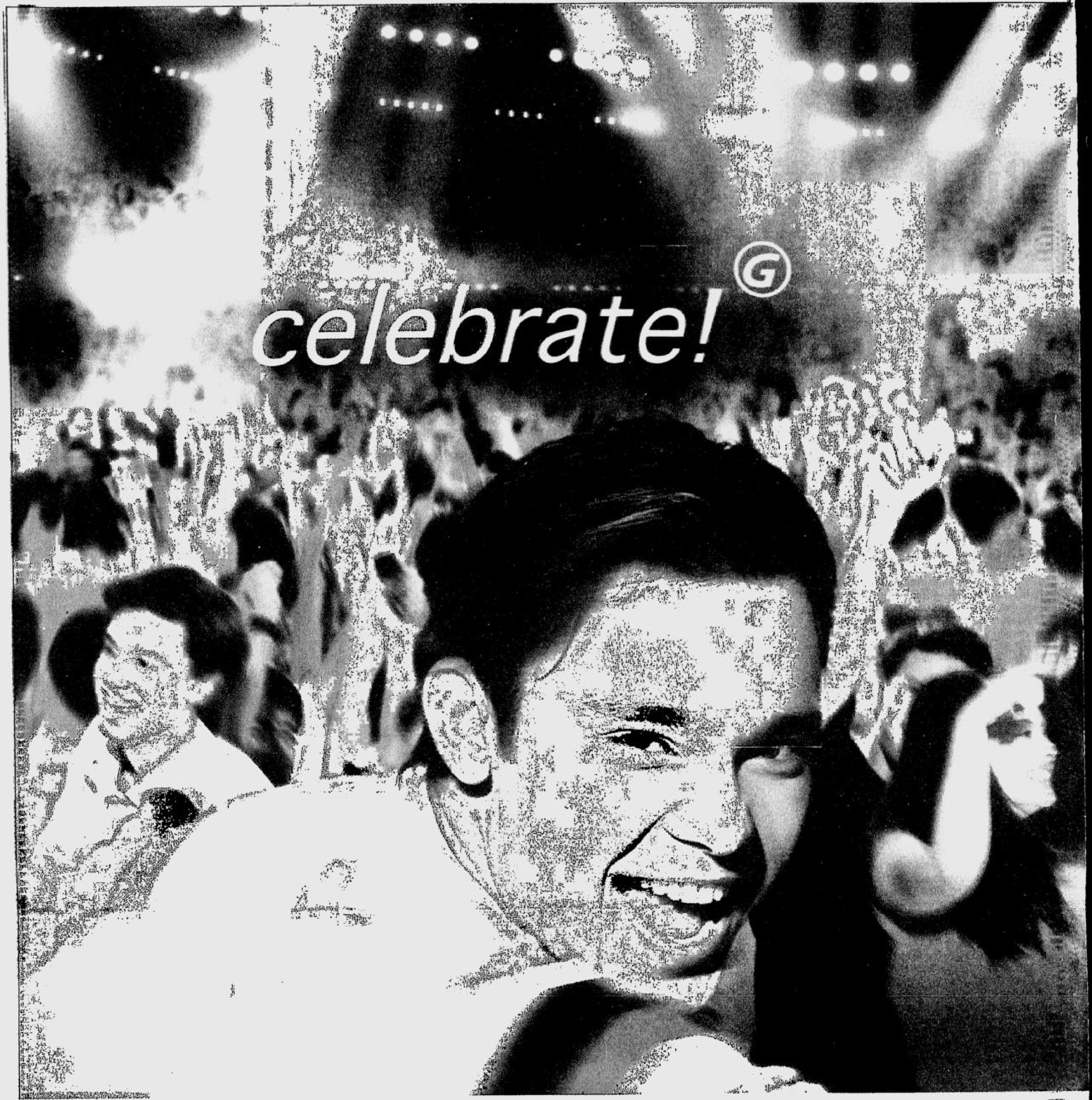

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Pope says he never believed Bulgarians behind 1981 assassination attempt

SOFIA, Bulgaria—Pope John Paul II told Bulgaria's president on Friday that he never believed there was a Bulgarian connection to the 1981 attempt on his life, a Vatican spokesperson said.

"I never believed in the so-called Bulgarian connection because of my great esteem and respect for the Bulgarian people," the Pope told President Georgi Parvanov in an official meeting, according to papal spokesperson Joaquin Navarro-Valls.

It was the first time John Paul has publicly expressed his view about lingering suspicions that Bulgarian secret agents were behind Turkish gunman Mehmet Ali Agca's shooting of the Pope in St. Peter's Square in Rome on May 13, 1981. An Italian court acquitted three Bulgarians of complicity, citing a lack of evidence.

Many Bulgarians had hoped that John Paul's visit—the first-ever to this former communist country by a Pope—would finally dispel the allegations that agents loyal to the Soviet KGB helped Agca plot the assassination attempt.

In his arrival speech Thursday, the Pope said he had "never ceased" to love the Bulgarian people.

"We had no interest in killing a pope. It's an absurd notion," said Petar Iliev, a 61-year-old Sofia retiree. **AP**

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US warns of possible rail, transit attacks

WASHINGTON— The US Department of Transportation has issued a warning about possible attacks on rail and transit systems across the country, law enforcement officials said on Thursday.

The department's warning was sent out on Wednesday and was based on unconfirmed and uncorroborated information, one law enforcement official said.

"It involves rail and transit systems . . . and is about possible attacks," he said.

The Department of Transportation consulted the FBI before issuing the warning, but the FBI did not put out a matching alert or advisory to law enforcement officials across the country, the official said.

He did not have details on how many cities' transit systems were being put on alert.

Transportation department spokesperson Chet Lunner said although the general threat was made against subway systems and no particular cities were targeted, the department decided to expand its advisory to include rail systems across the country as well.

The department is not advising the rail and transit systems to take any special precautions as part of its warning other than to maintain heightened awareness, Lunner said.

This is the latest of a series of warnings eight months after hijacked airplanes slammed into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field on Sept. 11, killing about 3,000 people.

Over the past week, a host of top US officials have issued a series of warnings of possible fresh attacks on the United States.

Vice President Dick Cheney warned over the weekend about the probability that extremists could launch fresh attacks. FBI Director Robert Mueller said on Monday another attack was "inevitable," and told President George W. Bush this week thatit would be difficult to stop another attack.

Officials said there has been a lot of intelligence coming in over the past few weeks warning of a possible attack, but they said it varied in terms of specificity and reliability. **Reuters**

WORLDBRIEFS

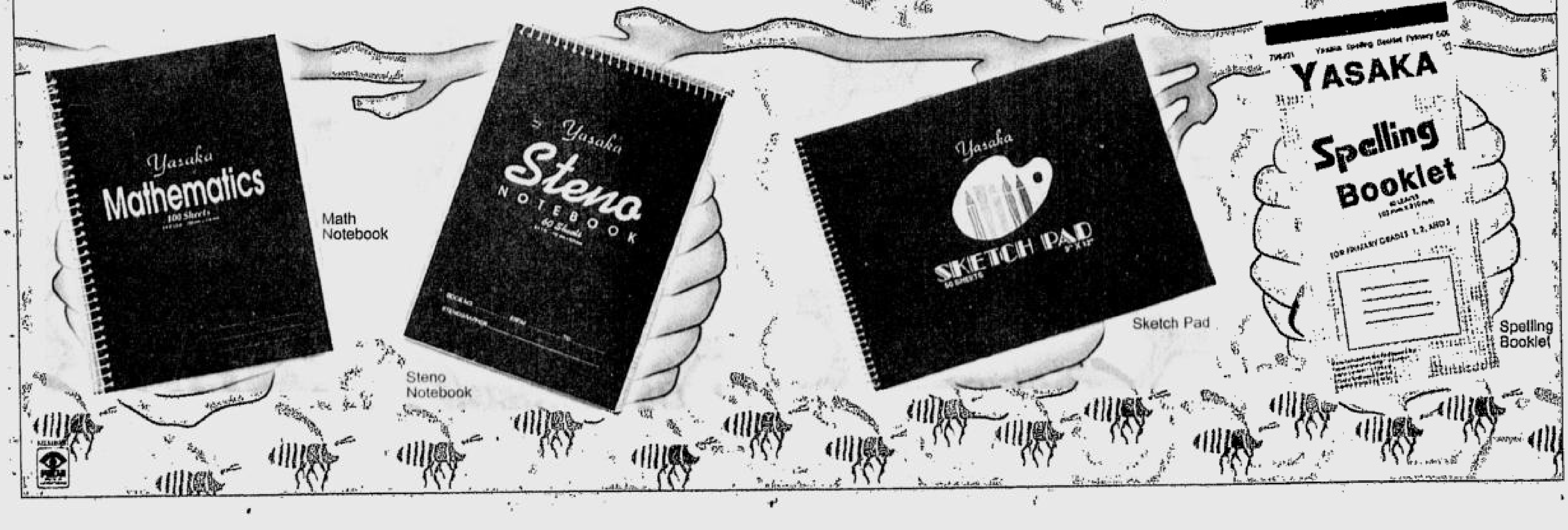
Kabul force extended

UNITED NATIONS—The UN Security Council voted unanimously on Thursday to extend the international security force in the Afghan capital, Kabul, for six months beyond June 20 and welcomed Turkey's offer to lead it. The council decided to extend the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) "as defined" in the original council resolution approving its deployment to Kabul and immediate surroundings. The 4,500-strong force has been under British command since it was set up in December to ensure security in Kabul after the collapse of the Taliban regime and the establishment of a UN-backed interim government. *AFP*

Ferry sinks in Bangladesh

BARISAL, Bangladesh—More than 60 people are missing, feared drowned, after a ferry sank in a river in southern Bangladesh three weeks after nearly 500 people were killed in a similar disaster, police said on Friday. The ferry, M.L. Suraha, had about 100 people on board when it sank in the Baleswar river during a storm on Thursday night, said police Supt. Abdullah Al-Azad, said. Nearly 40 passengers managed to reach the shore but the others were missing, feared drowned, he said. *Reuters*

Shopping for Back-to-School?



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Another sex scandal staring at Church

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

CAUAYAN CITY—Three siblings have accused a Catholic priest in Alicia town of having an eight-year illicit affair with their mother and have asked an Ilagan bishop to investigate the priest's alleged immoral conduct.

In a letter dated May 7, the siblings, aged 25, 19 and 16, "earnestly and urgently" requested Bishop Sergio Utleg and the Diocese of Ilagan to investigate the priest, a native of Cabagan town, for his alleged immoral activities.

The siblings said they would bring the "scandalous matter to the proper and higher authorities" if no immediate actions were taken against the priest.

"We have enough material and testimonial evidence to prove his guilt and (have him) removed from the service. (The priest) is not an asset to Christianity but rather a liability," they said.

The siblings' mother, a medical doctor, and the priest refused to talk with reporters when reached for comment.

The eldest among the siblings said she once heard her mother castigate the priest over the phone for having an affair with another woman.

Because of this, she said her mother and the priest broke up in November last year.

She claimed that her mother and the priest later reconciled when the priest asked for forgiveness.

One of the children said the priest had slept in their house several times.

She also accused the priest of getting money from her mother. "Almost all of my mother's earnings are going to the priest. What is painful was that my mother had been saying that her earnings went for our needs. No, because my mother and my father have been dividing their income for our expenditures," she said.

The children's father is separated from their mother. They said their mother had abandoned them since they exposed her affair with the priest.

Ibaloi priest to fight gods' spell when GMA visits 'holy' mountain

By Vincent Cabreza, Desiree Caluza and Jovelyn Reyes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The Department of Tourism has tapped an Ibaloi oracle and priest to guarantee the safety of President Macapagal-Arroyo's trek to Mt. Pulag, the country's second highest mountain, next month.

"If any enchantment is hurled against the presidential party on Mt. Pulag, a *mansipok* (an Ibaloi psychic) is prepared for that, *merong matatakbuhan* (We have someone to run to). But we would like to clarify that (Mt. Pulag gods do not hurl) curses. There are only enchantments," said DOT Cordillera Director Purificacion Molintas.

But agencies here were in a mad scramble on Thursday to damage control the objections raised by Ibalois and Kalanguyas to Ms Macapagal's trek, scheduled on June 5, because of its ecological impact on Mt. Pulag in Benguet.

"The INQUIRER story may have already discouraged (Malacañang) from pursuing (Ms Macapagal's) Mt. Pulag trip . . . That report about a curse (threatening Ms Macapagal) should be rectified," a DOT official said.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources officials also called the INQUIRER Northern Luzon Bureau to explain that their agenda to protect Mt. Pulag does not prohibit an ecotourism program for the region.

"We are not against tourism. We (only intend to) control the carrying capacity of Mt. Pulag (which was declared a national integrated protected area by the DENR in 1997)," Augusto Lagon, DENR assistant regional director for operations, said.

"The original plan is to allow the First Family a solitary and spiritual journey to Mt. Pulag so they can experience the nature of this Ibaloi haven. We did not plan to have a hundred people going there," said one of the trek's organizers.

He said the proposal was modified when the DOT and Renato Diaz, presidential adviser for North Luzon development, worked out a new Mt. Pulag tourism agenda for Ms Macapagal in Clark.

He said Diaz wanted to include the participants in the February North Luzon Expedition, but local organizers discouraged Malacañang from pursuing this plan.

"The people of Kabayan actually welcome tourism. This is very important for them. They earn from the seasonal trips to Mt. Pulag as guides. All they want is a condition where the mountain itself would not be affected by the number of people going up Mt. Pulag," the organizer said.

Records of the Mt. Pulag park manager's office in Daclan village in Benguet showed that from 12 to 50 people had gone to Mt. Pulag between March and May this year.

The average volume of Mt. Pulag trekkers can reach 4,000 seasonal visitors each year.

Lagon said the Mt. Pulag preservation office had earned up to P1 million in park fees from these regular trekkers.

"We realize the problems of overwhelming Mt. Pulag with people, and that is what we must focus on. We never intended that the First Family's trip to Mt. Pulag would be anything but an exercise in Ibaloi spirituality so (Ms Macapagal) can appreciate the necessity for preserving Mt. Pulag," an officer of the tourism press corps, one of the organizers of the trek, said.

5 areas face power cut-off

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Central Negros Electric Cooperative (Ceneco) faces disconnection from the National Power Corp. if it fails to pay P139.7 million by Monday.

A disconnection would plunge major cities of Negros Occidental into darkness. Ceneco covers the cities of Bacolod, Silay, Bago and Talisay cities and the towns of Murcia and Don Salvador Benedicto towns, with 104,848 consumers.

Benedicto Peralta, acting general manager of the power cooperative, yesterday said the Ceneco would need to find an immediate solution to its Monday deadline for its April bill.

This is because when the Napocor granted the Ceneco a special payment arrangement (SPA) that extended the deadline from May 6 to May 24 of the coop's March bill, Napocor said that it would be the last extension, Peralta said.

"Maybe this is because the Napocor has already granted Ceneco numerous SPAs since last year," Peralta said.

If Napocor would not grant Ceneco another SPA for its P139.7 million April bill, an option that Ceneco could take would be to have its debts restructured, he said.

House probe sought of Capiz 'shootout'

By Gerry T. Pagharion
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY--Rep. Rodriguez Dadivas of the first district of Capiz has filed a resolution Wednesday calling for a congressional inquiry into the bloody shootout that occurred in Dumalag town last week.

The shootout was triggered by the alleged anti-kidnapping operation conducted by the National Bureau of Investigation in Western Visayas against couple Dindo and Marivic Salazar of Poblacion Ilaya, Dumalag allegedly to rescue "kidnap victim" Madeline Supeda-Erada, a Manila-based physician.

Three were killed in the May 15 incident—Dindo; Perla Pasoquin, the sister of Erada who negotiated for her "release," and Army Private First Class Jenet Bacanto.

In a privilege speech, Dadivas said the investigation was needed so that the real issues and circumstances hounding the alleged shootout would be brought out.

This developed as alleged estafa cases against Erada have started to surface. This bolstered the claim of Marivic Salazar that she and her husband did not kidnap Erada but merely brought her to their house to negotiate the settlement of the almost half a million pesos that the physician owed them since five years ago.

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Pembo, Makati
PARLY S. DE VERA
San Jose City, Nueva Ecija

JOSE L. TENORIO
West Grace Park, Caloocan
IRENE MAE CANLAS
Brgy. 16, Bacolod City
SEVERINO BELARMINO
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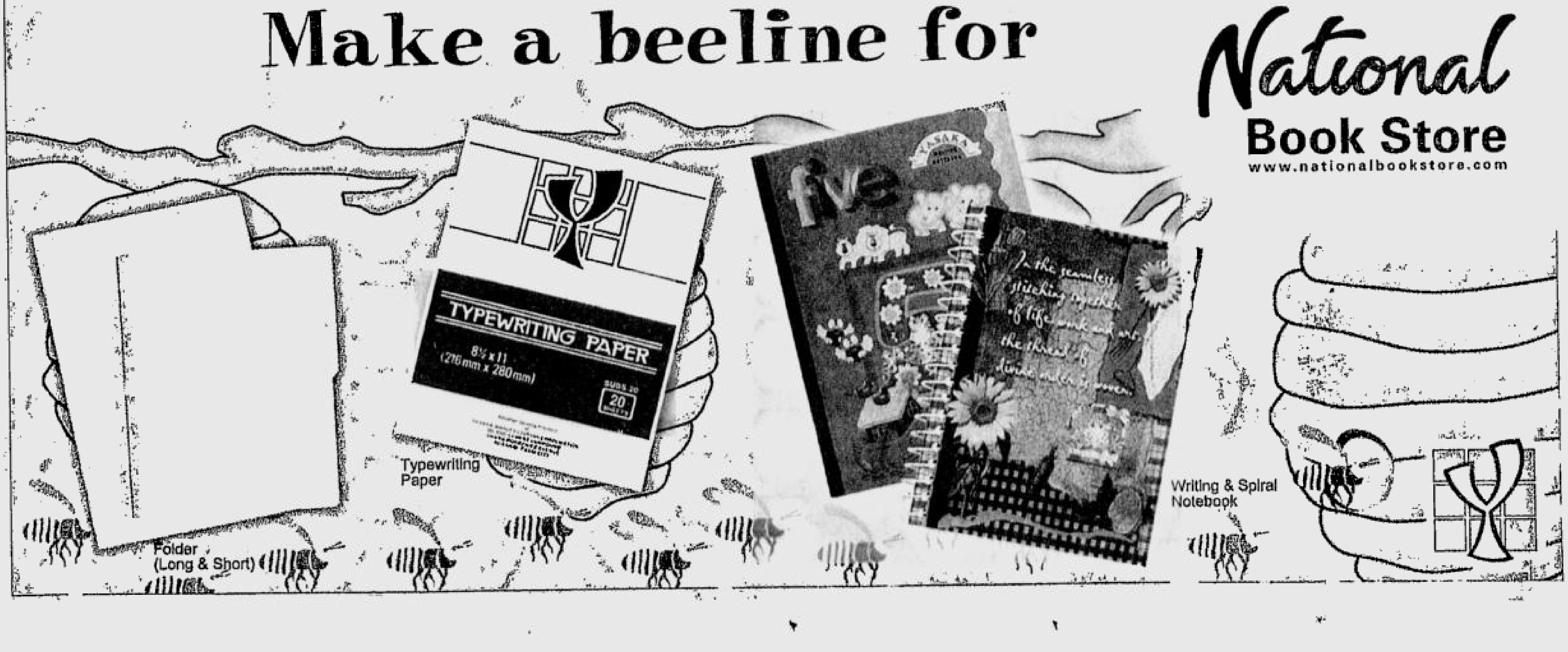


CONFLICT OF BENEFICIARIES

Cebu DAR exec threatens to quit over CARP mess

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—An official of the Department of Agrarian Reform Adjudicating Board based in Cebu is asking Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza to look closer into developments in the government's Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program in Central Visayas and investigate reports of irregularities in the program's implementation.

Regional Adjudicating Officer Arnold Arrieta told the INQUIRER that he was making the appeal to the secretary because he could not continue to work under existing conditions. "I'd rather retire," he said.

Arrieta went on leave after he was ordered transferred to Manila on March 20 on floating status. Arrieta said he believed that a strong lobby group had worked for his transfer.

Arrieta said there are many anomalies in the implementation of CARP in Negros Oriental.

He cited the case of the 2,500-hectare Montenegro Estate in Barangay Dawis in Bayawan City, where Certificates of Land Ownership Awards (Cloa) were given to farmers living in Bais City, which has resulted in a lot of tension in the area.

Probe

An investigation conducted by a team from the DAR central office early this year revealed that the awarding of the Cloa to the farmers living in Bais City was illegal. The team recommended that the implementing committee of the program from Task Force Visayas be held accountable for the installation of non-beneficiaries in the Montenegro Estate.

The report also recommended the prosecution of DAR employees who were responsible for acts which violated the guidelines.

Farmers in the Montenegro Estate now occupying the land have complained to the Office of the Ombudsman about their exclusion from the list of awardees.

Jovencio Pasague, chair of the Federated People's Organization of the Montenegro Estates, pointed to Task Force Visayas head Maria Lourdes Mariano, and Maximino Tenorio Jr. and Beauregardo Abejuela Jr. as the ones who installed non-beneficiaries in 2000 and 2001.

"This may be happening all over the country," Arrieta said.

Loans

He also alleged that the Cloa awardees for the Montenegro land who are living in Barangay Cambuilao have already borrowed a total of P13 million from the bank using their Cloas as guarantee. "How can they pay for the loans when they cannot earn from the land?"

Eugene Quirante of the Philippine Peasants Institute in Negros Oriental said there were several hitches during the identification of farmer beneficiaries in the Montenegro Estate.

He said the DAR team first referred to the records of the Commission on Elections to determine who were actual residents and voters of the area. Then, the team also referred to the payroll of the Montenegro Estate. The confusion started when the United Robina Sugar Milling Company (URSUMCO) leased the Montenegro Estate in 1988. The lease gave rise to two payrolls—that of URSUMCO's and the Estate's.

Quirante said the occupants of the Montenegro Estate are restless and want the DAR Central Office to decide on the matter. "They feel that they cannot trust the DAR provincial office to give justice to their plight," he said.

NGO influence

Arrieta said the implementation of the CARP is being influenced by the Philippine Network of Rural Development Institute (Philnet), a network of nongovernment organizations, which he said was out to corner the foreign funding for the project.

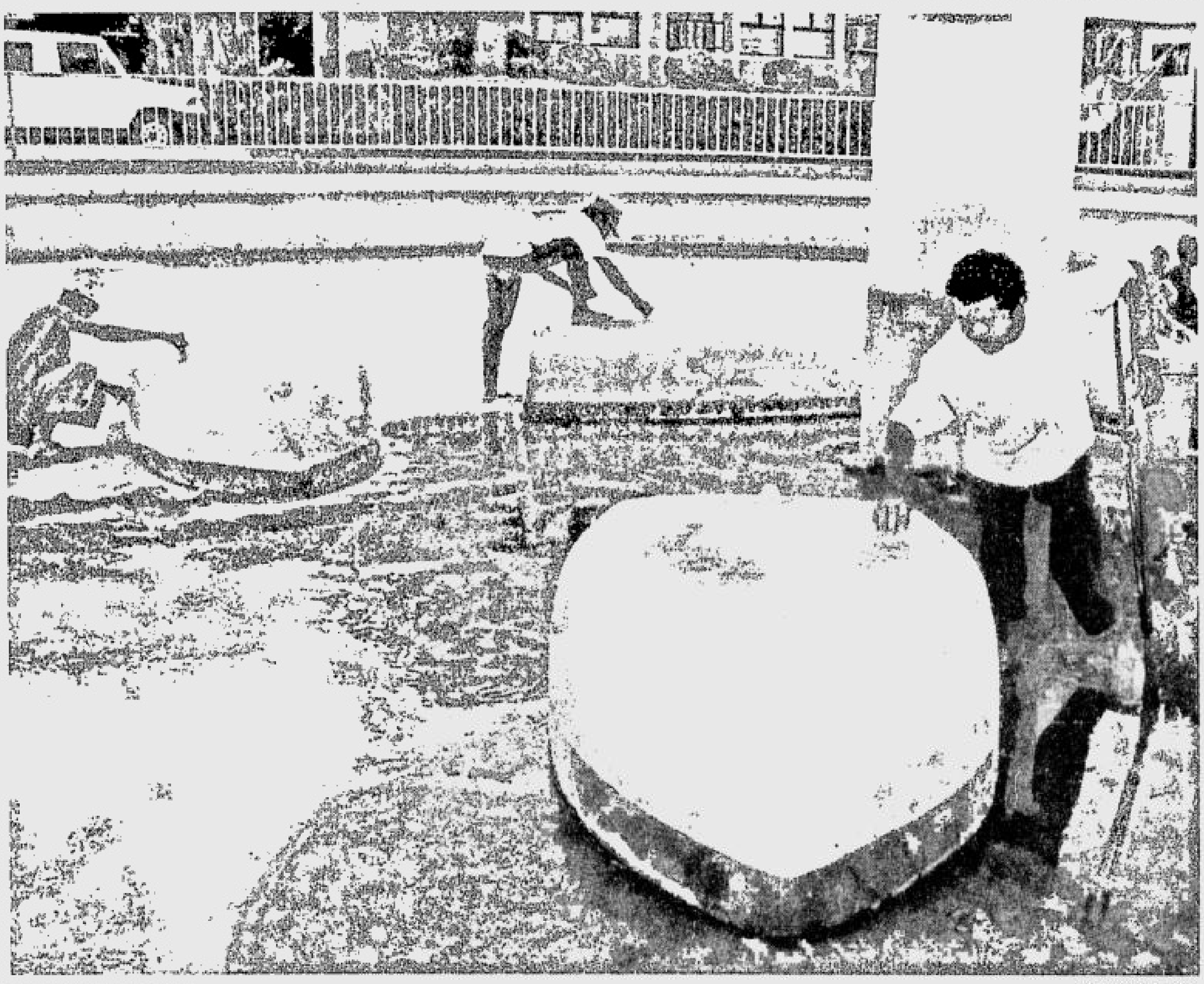
Arrieta said he also suspected that the NGO was behind the order transferring him to Manila after they accused him of being biased against one of their cooperative members.

Elsie Viliran, paralegal officer of Philnet, said they would welcome any investigation by the DAR of Arrietta's allegations. Viliran admitted that the Philnet had filed a petition against Arrieta and his colleague Romualdo Sipacio, because they were biased in their decisions. She said the DAR had made a lot of legal lapses in deciding on agrarian cases.

The Cebu-based Philnet has three cooperatives of agrarian beneficiaries in Canlaon City, Bayawan City and in Mabinay. It is also active in Escalante, Bohol, Ormoc and Iloilo.

On the issue of foreign funding, Viliran admitted that they do get foreign funding in the course of running their network, but they are accountable to these funding agencies. "There are strict monitoring procedures to be followed. Because of our track record, one can check if the programs were really implemented."

Viliran said the farmers need to unite in these organizations because "if they don't unite, they will never get what is due them."



HONEST WORK BEN MOSES EBREO

A disabled man joins several other workers of the Nueva Vizcaya government in cleaning boats that are used as a tourist attraction by the provincial government. The provincial government provides employment to handicapped persons.

Police say pros behind ambush of Abra prosecutor

Wounded official says he made enemies during the course of his gov't duties

By Leoncio Balbin Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BANGUED, Abra—Police said gun-for-hire groups were believed responsible for the ambush of an Abra provincial prosecutor and his three companions in Peñarubia town on Thursday.

Senior Supt. Arturo Quilop, Abra police director, said they were also looking into work-related angles as the motives of the killing.

He said they have identified two groups that planned to kill Abra Prosecutor Rodor Gayao.

Gayao and his three companions were shot and wounded when three armed men ambushed them while they were on their way to a court hearing in nearby Bucay town. A woman, who was on a motorcycle near the ambush site, was hit by a stray bullet.

Quilop refused to identify the suspected groups pending an investigation.

Aside from military personnel now guarding Gayao, Quilop sent two policemen to escort the prosecutor, who was wounded in the arm.

Gayao's police escort, PO2 Alexander Bagani, was hit in the shoulder and head while his companion, Ruben Brillantes, was hit in the elbow. Gayao's driver Jayson de Guzman, however, was unhurt.

Gayao, who became Abra provincial prosecutor in 1987, shared Quilop's theory that the ambush had something to do with his work.

"Since it is part of our function to decide the filing of cases, we cannot always please all parties," Gayao told the INQUIRER.

He said all cases in Abra are under his jurisdiction because the prosecutor handling them had retired.

Among the voluminous cases he is now handling are the more than 50 murder cases of prisoners detained at the Abra provincial jail.

Unfazed by the ambush attempt, Gayao said: "It looked like we could have arrived too early as they had rushed it."

He said when they reached the top of a 40-degree slope on the highway in Barangay Lusuac in Peñarubia, at least three bonnet-wearing men opened fire and kept on firing at them.

Gayao and his companions were riding in a Nissan car. Although one of the tires burst, Gayao told De Guzman to overtake a motorcycle until they reached the Bucao police station, about 5 kilometers from the ambush site.

Bagani, who was seated behind Gayao, shielded the prosecutor with his body.

Nancy Belena, one of two passengers in the motorcycle overtaken by Gayao's car, was hit by a stray bullet. Police recovered 27 spent bullets of an M16 rifle from the scene.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Western Luzon, Western Visayas and Western Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Hi32° Lo 24°
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 23° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 22°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 26°
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 26°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/05/25/02

2 Benguet towns clash over share in taxes from mining

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—A dispute over taxes paid by a mining firm has caused a rift between Itogon and Tuba towns in Benguet and chances are, local officials may go to court to resolve the issue.

The legal question centers on the Local Government Code's concept of what constitutes "mining" and "mining operations."

Once the provincial board fails to break the impasse between the two municipalities, the Department of Budget and Management and the Bureau of Internal Revenue may hold in escrow the share of the two towns from mining taxes.

The BIR collects more than P56 million in national wealth taxes a year from the operations of Philex Mining Corp. in Itogon and Tuba.

The issue started when Tuba bolted from a 50-50 sharing agreement with Itogon over Philex Mines' annual tax dues and when the BIR decided to impose the tax sharing based on the Local Government Code.

The sharing scheme brokered by the BIR was adopted in 1994 following the failure of the Benguet provincial board to settle the two towns' boundary dispute that has brought local officials at odds since 1951.

The dispute covers areas of Philex Mines operations that belong to Tuba and Itogon. Philex operates in Barangay Ampucao in Itogon and Camp 3 in Tuba.

Tuba said under the Local Government Code, Itogon is not entitled to any of the tax dues from Philex. Itogon disagreed, saying it is entitled to a bigger share than Tuba because of its bigger land area and population.

Philex paid the government P56.6 million and more than P57 million in national wealth taxes, called excise taxes, for 2000 and 2001.

Following the Local Government Code, 40 percent of the taxes paid or more than P22 million for the last two years should go to Benguet, which is affected by Philex's mining operations.

Of the 40-percent share of Benguet, 20 percent will go to the province, 45 percent to the town where the mines are located, and 35 percent to the barangay where the mines operate.

But since Philex operates in two barangays in Tuba and Itogon, and with their unsettled boundary problem, the officials of both towns earlier agreed to halve the taxes.

However, Tuba refuses to resume the 50-50 scheme. Tuba cited a certification issued by the Bureau of Mines and Geological Sciences that the "location and actual extraction site of Philex Mines' mining operation is located within Tuba."

Tuba said under the Local Government Code, the town where the natural resources are located should get 45 percent of the 40-percent share of local government units, meaning Tuba should receive all the taxes.

Tuba Councilor Jessie Marie Alos said Itogon is not entitled to a single centavo since the BMGS has certified that Philex's extraction site lies within Tuba.

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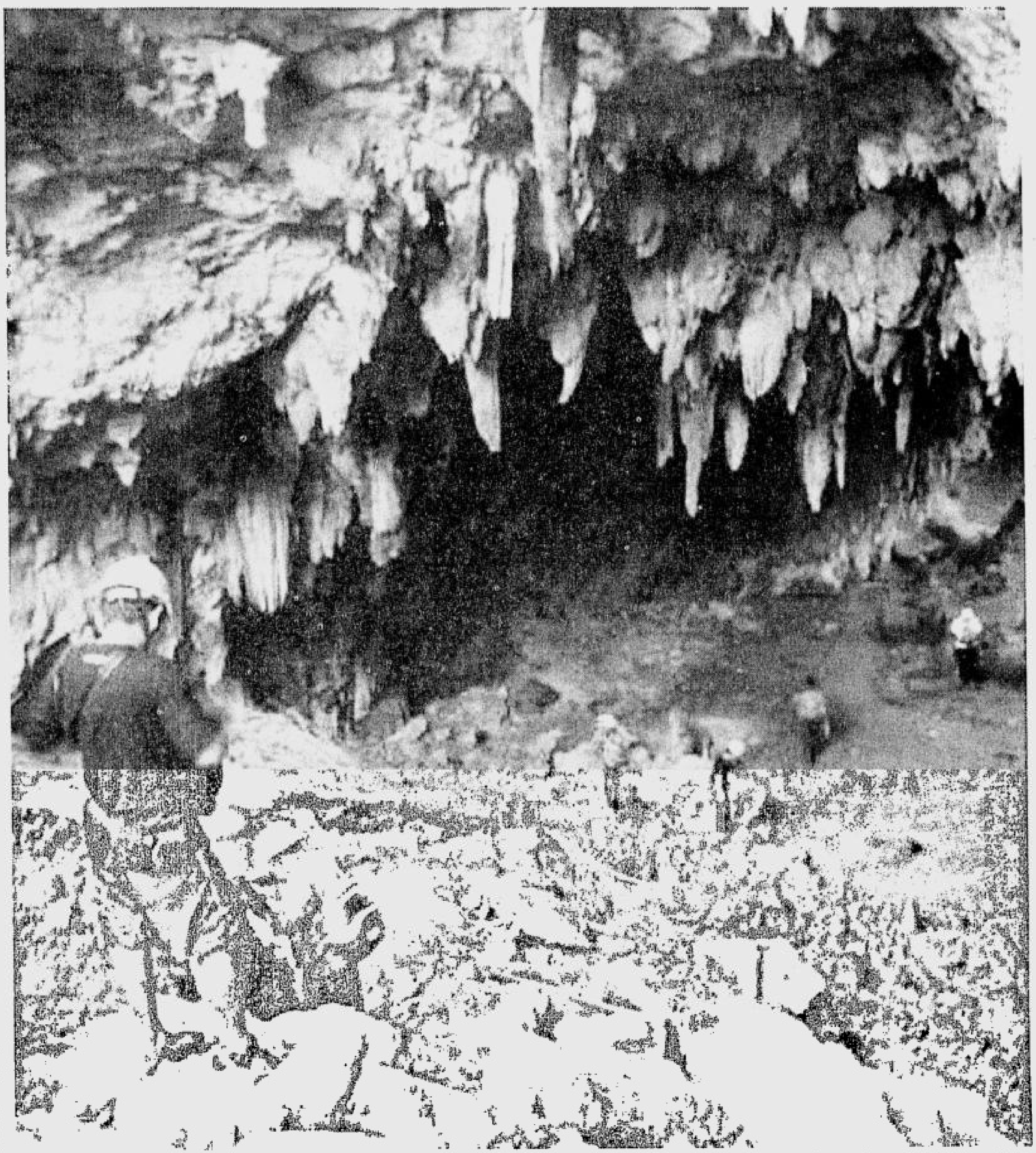
INQUIRER Visayas
Editor Jun Bandayrel Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

Rediscovering the caves of Mabinay

By Alex V. Pal
Mabinay, Negros Oriental



THE MOUTH of the Panligawan Cave, one of about 100 caves in Mabinay town, dwarfs visitors who are drawn into the dark crevices of the cave.

ALEX V. PAL

THE WINDING road leading to the agricultural mountain town of Mabinay at the boundary of the two Negros provinces seems to stop at an intersection in Barangay Bulwang.

The van halts a stone's throw away from the highway and its passengers disembark, don their helmets and ready their flashlights. From all over the world, tourists come to this place to explore caves, which Mabinay has a lot of.

No one knows the exact number of caves in the town, some 80 kilometers from Dumaguete City. Estimates vary from 80 to 150, simply because the explorers have lost count or have yet to reach all of them.

Elery "Beam" Libo-on recalls the day he was introduced to spelunking. "I was asked by a group of journalists to accompany them to one of the caves because of my training in search and rescue. After that, I was hooked."

In his five years as a spelunker, Libo-on has explored more than 60 of the Mabinay caves. The number does not include the 25 caves explored by a team from Belgium, the Netherlands and the Philippines, which first tried to map the natural wonders in 1989.

"It's safe to say that we have more than 100," says Libo-on, who, together with Jeffrey Dascian, is among the guides of amateur spelunkers in Mabinay.

The town boasts of having two of the longest and one of the deepest caves in the country.

The Odioman, which is 8.87 km long and 82 meters deep, is the second longest cave and the sixth deepest. Its attraction lies in its many mysterious chambers and corridors that had not been fully explored by the Belgian-Dutch-Philippine team.

The Kayasu, which is 2.222 km long, is the ninth longest cave.

'The holes'

A unique characteristic to most of the Mabinay caves is that more than half have subterranean rivers, mostly heading north.

Libo-on recommends eight caves as a must-see for tourists. "These are easy to reach, and for those looking for extreme spelunking, we have other caves that offer a real challenge."

It took some time before outsiders noticed the beauty of the caves because the local residents didn't care about them.

"Most of the caves had no formal names and were only referred to as *mga bangag* (holes) by the locals. Worse, they were surrounded with superstitious beliefs and wild tales," says Libo-on.

Some people also entered the caves to hunt treasures, as evidenced by holes dug inside a few. This, Libo-on adds, has so far been the greatest threat to the caves.

Other dangers come from people stealing stalactites and stalagmites, and those gathering guano and birds' nests.

Cave guides

Perhaps in the next few months, Mabinay would have already put up a system to protect the caves as a source of tourism revenues.

Mayor Enozario Baldoza says he will ask the provincial government for help in developing the caves by identifying them and improving access to them. "But we will leave the insides untouched," Baldoza promises.

The plan also calls for the training of more guides. A guide for at most 20 persons would be paid P800 per day for services, while headgear and other equipment could be rented for another P500.

Tourists interested to visit the caves are advised to see Libo-on at the Negros Oriental Search and Rescue Office at the Lorenzo G. Teves Aqua Center beside the provincial capitol in Dumaguete.

Those who go directly to Mabinay may get in touch with Jeffrey Dascian, who lives along the highway in Barangay Paniabonan.

The first Police Protocol on VAW

LUCID INTERVAL

Rowena V. Guanzon

I WAS asked if children can lie when they say they were raped. I say that it is very difficult for a woman to come out and say that she was raped. More so when the victim is a child. Children are afraid not only to tell their story, they are afraid of the system.

The police, prosecution and court processes are intimidating to children, be they rich or poor. Many children don't want to talk about sexual abuse to strangers, and that includes the police and prosecutors.

I have clients who are children and I always have to remind myself that I have to adjust to their language, unspoken language, pace, and temperament. Often I rely on the social worker to help me with the interview.

Going to the police is the first step a sexually abused child has to take when they or their parents file a complaint. It is important that the police and hopefully, the prosecutors, when handling cases of violence against women and children, listen to the complainants with sensitivity, patience and understanding. Victims can be discouraged if the police personnel are insensitive.

To ensure that the Women's and Children's Desk (WCPD) chiefs are trained properly in handling the investigation of and crisis intervention in cases of violence against women and children, Senior supt. Geary Barias, the Philippine National Police director of Negros Occidental, now has the draft of their manual, **"Police Protocol in Handling VAW cases."**

This is the first project of its kind in the entire country, and could be a model for other provinces and regions to follow. The police is a hierarchical organization and orders come from the top. In this project, it is Camp Crame who should be proud that its provincial PNP has taken the initiative to improve their capability in protecting the rights of women and girls.

With a provincial population of 2.1 million and 12 cities and 19 municipalities, we can estimate that at least half are women and girls. With over a million women and girls we have only 58 WCPD officers in Negros Occidental and five from Bacolod. Although they are few, they are among the most aggressive police personnel I have met. Some of them even get in conflict with their chiefs of police who try to influence the settlement of rape cases.

Vangie Alfaro, the CWPDO chief of San Carlos City, remembers chasing a suspect with her police miniskirt uniform raised to her waist. Lize Fe Pellejo of Ilog is the outstanding policewoman of Western Visayas (Region 6).

While many police personnel are afraid to enter residences even when there is a call for help in cases of domestic violence, many WCPD officers in Negros have risked being charged with qualified trespassing.

> 'Many . . . officers in Negros have risked being charged with qualified trespassing . . .'

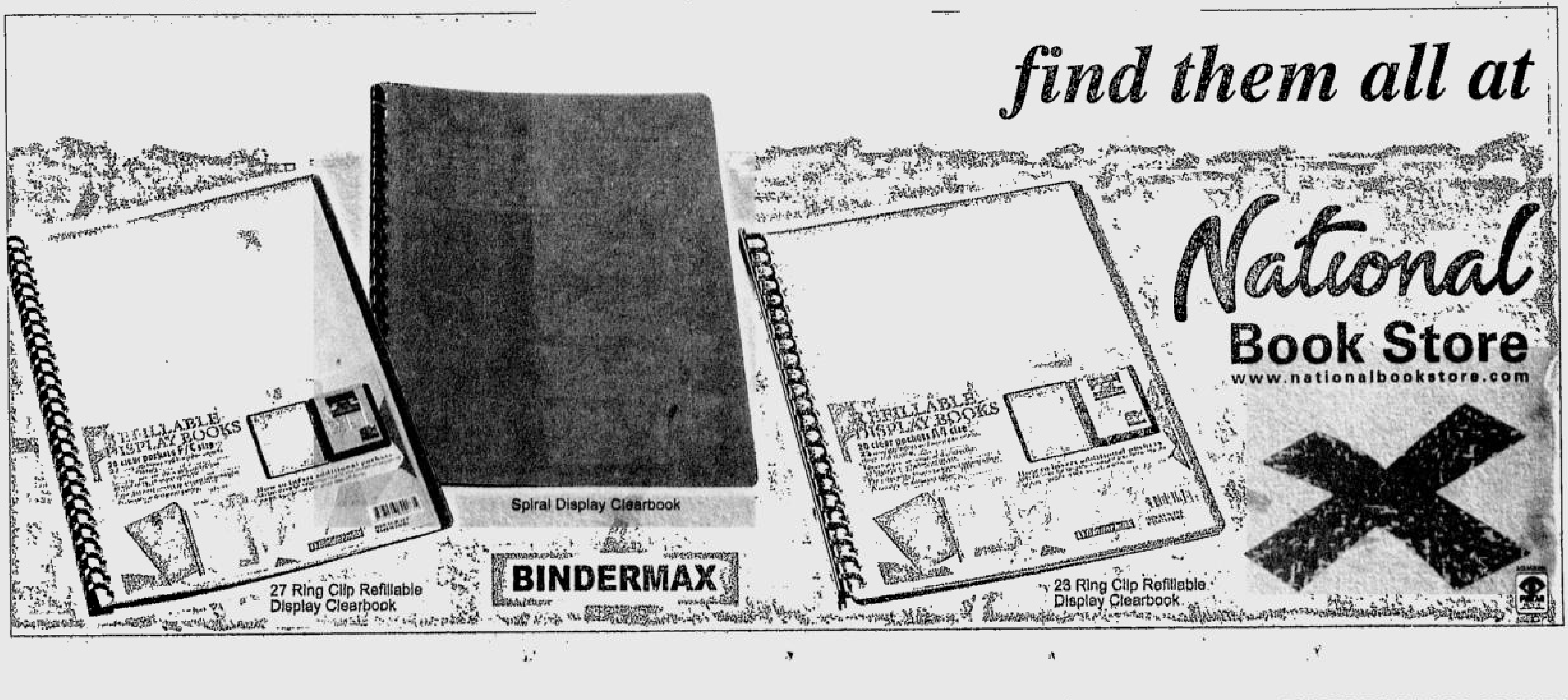
We emphasized in the Protocol that if the police have personal knowledge that a man is beating his wife, partner or child, then a crime is being committed. That should assure the police that in entering the residence of the offender, she or he is in the right.

In the Police Protocol, the police are advised that in entering residences, they bring along a *barangay* official and a social worker if children are involved.

The manual/protocol has the "Do's" and "Don'ts" for the police. Among the "Do's" when interviewing children are: call a social worker before interviewing; spend time and build rapport with the child by playing or talking about friendly subjects; use age-appropriate language; never encourage the child to take off her clothes to show physical marks of abuse; if necessary, stop the interview and continue with it another day; thank the child.

It also contains reminders to the media when covering cases of violence against women and children.

The Negros Occidental PNP has set the trend and perhaps the standard. Can the other provinces do less?



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Blackout traced to computer glitch; 7 suspended

From page A1

change to call off trading and stopped work in factories, offices and other business establishments.

"Investigations are also ongoing to determine what caused the failure of two circuit breakers at the Sta. Rosa substation owned by the (Meralco)," he added.

2, not 1

On Tuesday, Gonzaga said a "spurious signal" caused the Sta. Rosa breakers to open even if they were not supposed to. Breakers are like switches that open and close an electrical circuit and at the same time turn a light bulb on and off.

But at a news briefing yesterday, officials of Transco and Meralco said there were actually two erroneous signals that caused breakers in Meralco's Sta. Rosa and Napocor's Biñan substations to open.

"Our investigation revealed that the trip commands apparently came from within our separate power line carrier systems," Transco vice president Rolando Bacani said.

A power line carrier is a communication system that controls the opening or closing of transmission circuits in the process of balancing power generation and power demand.

"The wrong signal in Biñan came from our PLC while the one in Sta. Rosa came from Meralco's," Bacani said. "That is why we should not blame each other."

Monday

Fortunato Leynes, head of Meralco's energy management division, said the Lopez-controlled utility firm had detected problems in its system as early as Monday.

"Our men were investigating the problem when the blackout occurred. That is why we had people in the Sta. Rosa substation," Leynes said.

The Biñan-based Guieb said Meralco workmen were seen at the supposedly unmanned Sta. Rosa substation when the blackout hit.

The substation, which is 5 kilometers from the Meralco office in Biñan, is the halfway station between high-voltage transmission and low-voltage distribution to end-users of electricity, he said.

"Our crews immediately inspected the transmission lines when the power went out," Guieb said. "One of these crews found Meralco personnel working on the unmanned substation."

But like ranking Transco officials, Guieb said he was not laying the blame on Meralco, which is Napocor's biggest customer.

"We just want to be heard because the transmission lines that tripped are under our care," he said.

Guieb also said he did not know what had caused the Biñan-Sta. Rosa line to trip.

He added: "All I know is that there have been no defects in the transmission lines."

According to Guieb, the events leading to the blackout are on record in:

- A transient recorder that records brief trips that are considered normal or do not disrupt the transmission system.
- A sequence-of-events recorder, which is similar to security cameras in buildings or flight recorders in aircraft.
- The digital fault recorder, which records defects in the transmission lines that can be caused by vegetation coming in contact with cables, lightning, and wear and tear caused by the elements.

"These systems are partly redundant, which means certain data can be cross-checked among the three of them," Guieb said.

Moro rebs rebuilding, military suspects

By Edwin O. Fernandez
PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao has been relatively quiet for the past months, but this silence has given the Moro Islamic Liberation Front an opportunity to recruit and rebuild forces, police said.

Speaking at a recent Regional Peace and Order Council meeting, Senior Supt. Ismael Daulog, ARMM police deputy chief for operations, said the sporadic clashes between government troops and Moro rebels in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur had died down because of the peace initiatives of the government and the MILF.

However, Daulog said, the MILF had taken advantage of the space brought about by the peace talks and ceasefire agreements.

He said the rebels were "recruiting and training new members in isolated and clandestine camps" and "continuously inciting the Bangsamoro people in their quest for independence."

Daulog did not disclose the location of the supposed camps or the extent of the MILF's supposed recruitment and training activities.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu was quick to deny Daulog's claim.

"We have enough forces but they are on standby in different areas," Kabalu said.

But he admitted that their forces were under orders to remain on the defensive while MILF leaders were trying to establish a harmonious relationship with the government.

Almost all of the MILF camps in mainland Mindanao are in the hands of government forces. But they are now being developed and rehabilitated as a result of initial agreements between the government and the secessionist group.

Power solutions: More heat than meat

From page A1

power distributors, principally the largest, the Manila Electfrc Co. (Meralco).

Sen. Joker Arroyo has other ideas. He said Ms Macapagal and Congress are "engaged in Indian-giving" with the people as they continue to mislead the public on the real story behind the country's energy problem.

The government, he said, "should make the public know how much the Napocor is losing, the stranded costs of the IPPs (independent power producers) and such other liabilities that it presently shoulders."

"Even a rough estimate would be good for the edification of the public. Only formulas which no one understands are given," Arroyo said.

Tell the truth

Arroyo chided the Macapagal administration for having had acted "haphazardly" when it pushed for the immediate passage of the Energy Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) last year in the outgoing 11th Congress.

Arroyo, who was then Makati congressman, said Malacañang lobbyists impressed on Congress that if the law was passed, "we would have lower electricity rates."

"But one year after the Epira was enacted, it is undergoing changes—a testament to how crudely it was crafted. Electric bills have not gone down," Arroyo said.

He added that "Congress cannot even make heads or tails of this technical law."

Angara formula

Angara would have some 8 million households consuming not more than 100 kwh exempted from paying the stranded costs of the Napocor, which make up 65 percent of its PPA.

Another 1.5 million power consumers with monthly consumption of 101 kwh to 300 kwh should pay only 50 percent of the stranded costs to give a break to low- to middle-income families.

Translated into peso terms, this counter proposal by Angara would result in huge savings for 9.5 million families and households now burdened by the high cost of electricity.

According to Angara, the state has the obligation to shoulder the bulk of the stranded costs which at present is passed on to consumers.

He said the stranded costs were a direct result of the onerous and lopsided contracts signed by the government with IPPs.

Under those contracts, even unused power was paid for, mostly by the consumers.

"The IPP contracts are their contracts. The Napocor negotiated them, they had full control over them so why should they pass on the burden to consumers?" Angara asked.

Angara said that sparing the PPA of Meralco from the rate cut, which was what Malacañang-supported Senate committee report endorsed, cannot be justified.

He also proposed a cap on the stranded costs that can be charged from end-users, power generation entities and distribution utilities.

Oreta's proposal

For her part, Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta wanted to bar power distributors like Meralco from including their non-electricity related assets in the computation of their allowable profit margin.

The Epira, she said, must be amended in such a way that the computation of Meralco's return on rate base (RORB), a measure of its profitability, will exclude assets that are not related to Meralco's function of electricity distribution.

The RORB was the gauge used by the government and international creditors to keep Meralco profitable.

Thus, an 11-percent RORB which Meralco is asking for, means that for every peso worth of its total assets, it must have a profit of 11 percent of 11 centavos, which would be achieved by passing on this burden to consumers through electricity rate increases, Oreta explained.

What is anomalous under this scheme, according to Oreta, is that Meralco lumps its non-electricity related businesses, such as the Rockwell shopping mall in Makati City and the Meralco Theater in Pasig City, in computing its RORB.

"A company with big assets means that it requires a bigger RORB," Oreta said. "With Meralco including non-electricity related businesses that could be losing money in the computation, this would result in inflated assets yielding small profits, which means a higher RORB to justify Meralco's petition for a rate increase," she added.

Oreta likewise said that quick-fix solutions such as suspending the payment of the PPA surcharge merely skirt the issue of high electricity rates and postpone the problem of consumers shouldering the financial obligations of the Napocor to IPPs.

No support for moratorium

In an interview at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday, acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable Jr. said the President does not support a moratorium.

"What the President has said is that the PPA will be replaced by a universal charge upon approval of the ERC (Energy Regulatory Commission), which will come after the bill is passed," he said.

Last April 8 Ms Macapagal ordered the Napocor to immediately stop imposing its P1.25/kwh share in the PPA.

She said Napocor would not collect the PPA until the ERC approves the universal charge that Napocor asked for.

Napocor has a pending application with the ERC to impose a P0.40/kwh universal charge that will be levied for 20 years, in lieu of the PPA.

Senate Bill No. 2109 and House Bill No. 4741 provide for such a universal charge.

Afable yesterday said they welcome some opposition senators' proposal to bring down the PPA below P0.40/kwh.

"Our position is that the lower the figure, the better, for as long as it meets all the requirements of the public and the stability of Napocor and our economic interest," he said.

Afable said they are willing to cooperate in the Senate investigation of IPP contracts "as far as they were acted upon during our administration."

FVR won't cooperate

But former President Fidel Ramos yesterday turned down the invitation of Senate committee on government corporations and public enterprises chair John Osmeña to testify before a Senate inquiry into allegedly onerous contracts entered into with the IPPs during his tenure.

According to Osmeña, among the "onerous" contracts was the $200 million-State-Harbin 200-megawatt coal plant in Mindanao which was approved just eight days before Ramos ended his term on June 30, 1998.

He also cited the Casecnan Power-Irrigation project which cost the government P3 billion annually even before it became operational and the Binga Dam Rehabilitation project which was entered into with China's Chiang Jiang.

Osmeña also pointed out that the Casecnan project was given to an American company, US Cal Energy, without the benefit of a duly advertised public bidding. The head of the company was identified as retired US general Donald O'Shie who was a classmate of Ramos at West Point.

According to him, the Chiang Jiang project was handled by alleged Ramos cronies Catalino Tan and Lakas stalwart Joey Rufino.

Demeaning

"Some senators have opined, that this practice of calling on past Presidents at every turn for inquiries of this nature, if allowed unabated, would demean the Office of the President," Ramos told Osmeña in a three-page letter.

He said he was turning down Osmeñas invitation because he "owed it to the other past Philippine Presidents as well as to the incumbent Presidents, and even to future Presidents, to repeat this observation which might cause the latter to refrain from making hard or tough decisions.

NEA also blamed for PPA

From page A1

was its failure to award a P600-million project which entailed the purchase of electric posts despite the holding of several biddings since 1999.

Under the IPB-80 Project, NEA was supposed to buy 60,000 wood poles and crossarms. The project had been funded since 1992 by a $100-million financial assistance from Japan to bankroll the country's rural electrification program.

NEA had also conducted numerous international tenders to procure materials and equipment for putting up additional power distribution lines to provide electricity to remote barangays.

Expired loan

"But corruption, rigged biddings and favoritism delayed the implementation of the project," said Jimenez. He claimed scrambling among NEA officials to get a piece of the project resulted in failed biddings until the loan tender expired last year.

"The Japanese investors had already backed out because NEA officials could not get their act together. What will happen now to our remote barrios with the expiration of the loan validity in October 2001?"

Jimenez called on Congress and the Department of Justice to investigate NEA officials responsible for the failure of the national rural electrification program, which could have used the excess power to benefit rural consumers.

Bidding mess

Jimenez said that NEA's failure to undertake the simple task of awarding the project to a private bidder further complicated the PPA issue.

Earlier, a bidder accused NEA officials of rigging a bidding to favor a Binondo-based firm, which allegedly used a dummy firm to win the contract.

The Pacific Synergy International Inc., represented by its local agent, the Tri-State Pole and Piling Inc., even asked former President Joseph Estrada to stop NEA officials from awarding the project to the winning bidder, the Nerwin Industries Inc.

NEA officials had denied any irregularity in the bidding process. They said that the agency could not award the project to the first-ranked bidder (Pacific/Tri-State) to save some P120 million.

The officials said that of the four top bidders, Pacific secured fourth place in the financial bid, while Nerwin ranked first. The other two—Koppers Timber Preservation Ltd. and Goldpine Industries—ranked second and third, respectively.

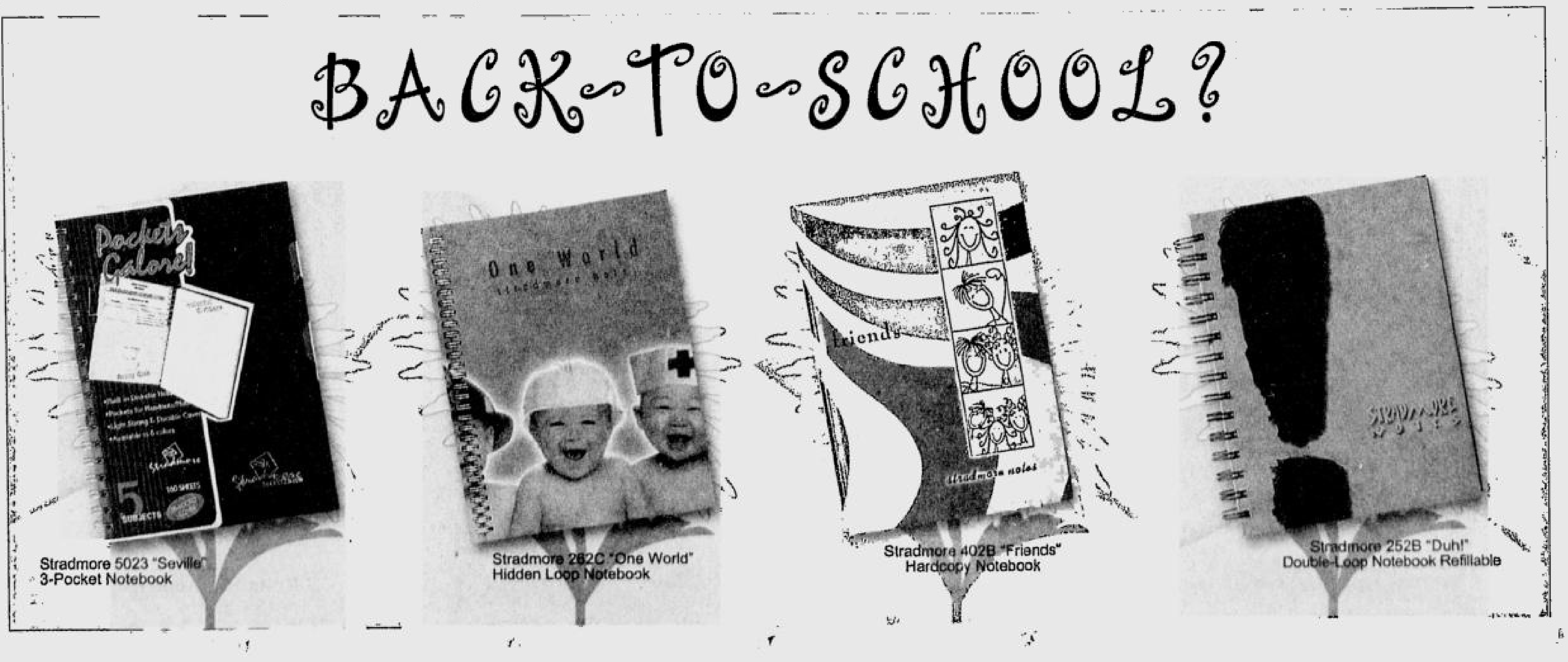
Disappearing funds

The bidding was also attended by the mysterious disappearance of about P90 million in cash bid bonds, which the four private bidders had put up as a requirement for their participation.

The Ombudsman's Office, which investigated the matter, has yet to resolve the case even after the National Bureau of Investigation recommended the filing of criminal charges against a bank manager and three NEA employees. The respondents had allegedly withdrawn the cash bonds and converted them into treasury bills, considered patently illegal.

Pablito Calayag, manager of the Land Bank North Avenue branch, had fled to the United States and is believed to be hiding in California, according to Jimenez.

The NBI said that the three alleged NEA employees could not have illegally withdrawn the money and then converted them into treasury bills without the collusion of top bank officials like Calayag and NEA officials.



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Palace won't budge on pact with Moro rebs

From page A1

Aquilino Pimentel, on the other hand, told the Philippine Constitution Association that there was nothing substantial in the interim agreements, and that these were bound to fail.

"Treason simply means betrayal," Ople said at a press conference. "It is a betrayal of the sacrifices of soldiers who fought and died for (the capture of MILF camps). The souls of the Filipino soldiers who lost their lives in the recovery of the rebel camps will not be able to rest."

Ople also noted that the agreements were signed by a "shaded figure" like Gonzales, and not by the Philippine ambassador to Malaysia who was invited to the signing ceremony.

At the House, more lawmakers aired additional objections and called for the immediate renegotiation of the interim agreements.

"I think Bert Gonzales had good intentions, but he doesn't understand the diplomatic nuances of some very sensitive matters. *Naisahan tayo*," said Negros Occidental Rep. Jun Lozada, chair of the House foreign relations committee.

Zamboanga City Rep. Celso Lobregat also told the INQUIRER that Afable would be the next subject of the House inquiry on the agreements.

"We're asking that Secretary Afable be called to testify because he is one of the main architects of the agreements," Lobregat said.

Careful reading

Ermita said lawmakers needed only to read the agreements carefully to see that the government had not compromised national interest to the MILF.

"There is nothing in (the agreements) saying we are returning to the MILF its former camps," he said by way of example.

The agreement signed on May 6 deals with cooperation in the interdiction of criminal gangs, particularly kidnap-for-ransom groups. That signed on May 7 covers the rehabilitation of areas devastated by the Estrada administration's "all-out war" policy in 2000.

Ermita took exception to claims by congressmen that the May 6 agreement granted the MILF police powers in areas it supposedly controlled.

"What they interpreted to be the grant of police powers was the joint communiqué that provides that the MILF agrees to cooperate with the (Armed Forces) and (Philippine National Police), and not allow criminal groups to enter areas where the MILF is present," he said.

Ermita said the MILF had agreed to cooperate in the fight against criminal gangs because it was often accused of being in cahoots with criminal elements, particularly the so-called "lost commands."

Afable took the same line, saying the agreement actually "gives the MILF the opportunity to help ferret out criminals."

Ermita also stressed that the AFP was not pulling out its forces from the more than 40 former MILF camps.

He pointed out that while the May 7 accord provided for the return of residents displaced in the course of the fighting in 2000, it did not mean that the MILF would retake these camps.

He said only unarmed parties or "peaceful civilians" would be allowed to return to these areas.

Ermita also explained that the reparations provided for under the May 7 agreement would not be in the form of cash but in the reconstruction of houses and other facilities destroyed in 2000.

"If you read the provisions, (you will see that) reparations will be made upon proof that a property is actually owned by somebody and that this is verified and acknowledged by both parties (the government and the MILF)," he said.

'Tribalized' approach

In a speech he delivered at the Philconsa meeting, Pimentel said the agreements were bound to fail because the government resorted to a "tribalized" approach in negotiating with the MILF.

He said the accord on rehabilitation and development only proved that the Macapagal administration did not have a comprehensive approach to address the secessionist movement.

He also said there was nothing much that the government could offer MILF chair Salamat Hashim if it did not change its peace formula.

"If the government offered to the MILF something better than it had offered to the Moro National Liberation Front, the MNLF would, of course, resent that," Pimentel said, adding:

"If it is equal to or the same as the offer that had been given the MNLF, then what is the MILF fighting for? In other words, there is no permanence to the kind of negotiations now being undertaken for the establishment of peace in Mindanao."

According to the senator, the missing element in the peace package was the creation of a Bangsamoro federal state, which will be part of the adoption of a federal republic of the Philippines.

Pimentel said this proposal was something that the MILF could not refuse because it would be acceptable to all the Moro tribes of Mindanao.

"The creation of a Bangsamoro federal state will enable them to promote, maintain and enhance their own culture and, probably for the first time in the history of our country, enable them to apply the Shariah law among the Moros," he added.

OIC

The Organization of Islamic Conference is apparently not keen on monitoring the implementation of the interim agreements.

According to a well-placed source at the Department of Foreign Affairs, the influential group of Islamic states is more concerned with the full implementation of the peace pact it brokered in 1996 between the government and the MNLF, which holds observer status in the OIC.

"They (the OIC) have taken notice of the agreements, but for them to be involved, that's another issue. The OIC has made it clear that its mandate is to monitor the full implementation of the accord (between the government and the MNLF)," said the source, quoting from a report by OIC secretary general Abdelouahed Belkeziz.

Article VI of that agreement's implementing guidelines on humanitarian, rehabilitation and development aspects provides that the parties shall take steps to activate the monitoring team with OIC representatives.

The OIC will only participate in the implementation of the interim agreements with the MILF if it sees that these will be crucial to the implementation of the peace agreement with the MNLF, the source said.

Senior officials of the OIC Committee of the Eight, which is monitoring developments in Mindanao, have withheld release of its report until issues concerning the interim agreements signed in Malaysia had been settled.

The Philippine government supposedly considers the committee report vital because it includes policies on the OIC's involvement in the question of Muslims in Mindanao, which would be adopted during the 29th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers meeting scheduled in Khartoum on June 22-24.

The senior officials of the OIC Committee of the Eight recently concluded a meeting in Jeddah, to which representatives of the Philippine government and the MNLF were invited to answer questions on the implementation of the 1996 accord.

The committee is composed of the foreign ministers of Malaysia, Brunei, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Senegal, Somalia and Indonesia.

Wednesday hearing

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr., House defense committee chair, said Afable would be asked to testify at the hearing on Wednesday.

Pichay said the committee was also inviting Interior Secretary Jose Lina to comment on the provision that supposedly gave the MILF police powers over its areas.

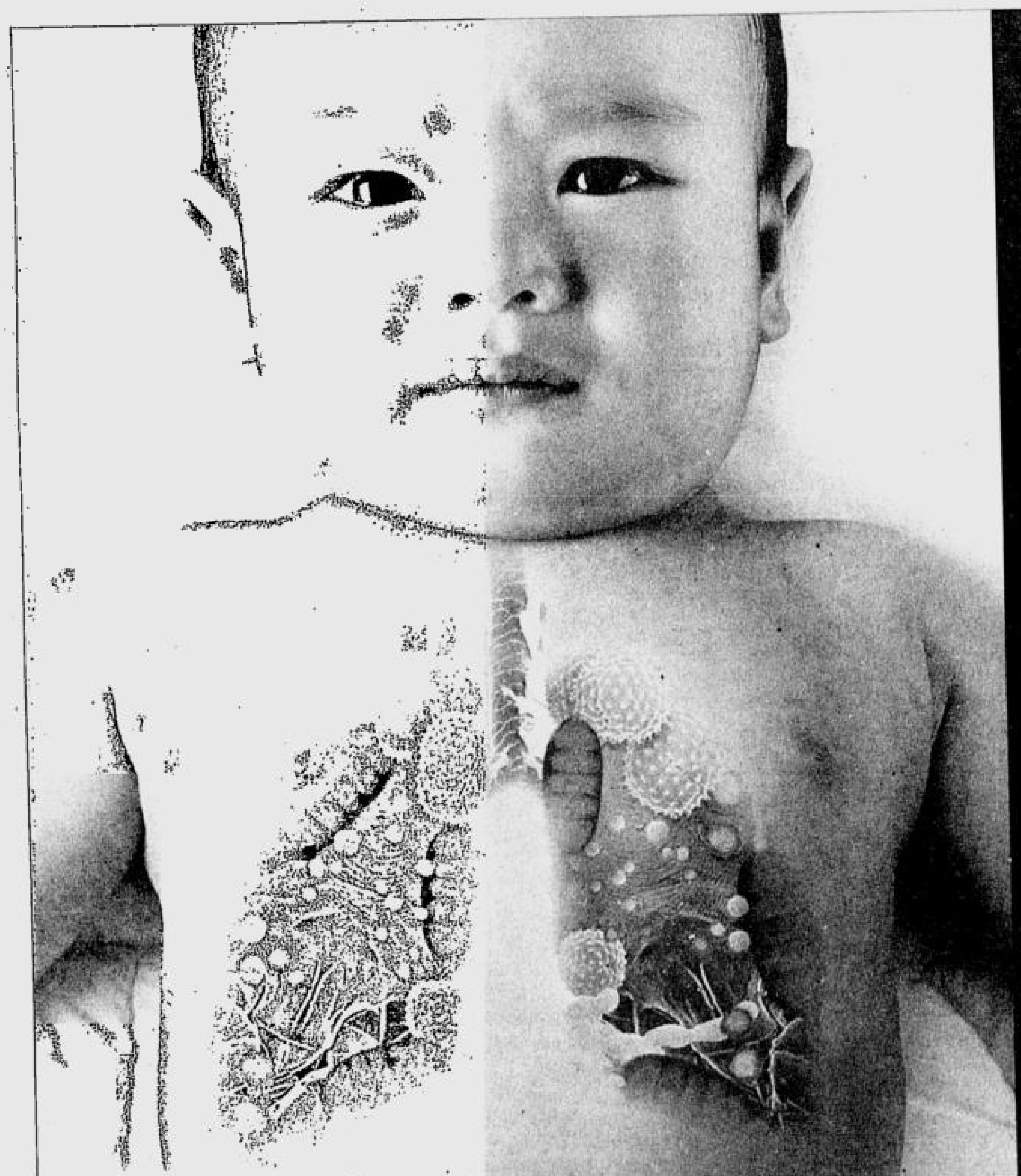
Lobregat recalled that during the first hearing of the committee last Wednesday, Jesus Dureza, the government's chief peace negotiator with the MILF, said Afable had crafted the implementing guidelines signed by Gonzales on May 7.

The guidelines provide for the rehabilitation of MILF areas and reparation for damages, which Pichay had described as among the "very dangerous provisions."

Lozada said there was "no choice but to renegotiate the agreements." He said that "if the MILF does not agree, we can refuse to implement the agreements, in which case we go back to square one."

Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr., chair of the appropriations committee, said the authority to disburse funds, as provided for in one of the agreements, could not be conferred on a private party, much less an insurgent group such as the MILF.

"Strictly speaking, the disbursement of accountable and 'auditable' public funds can only be carried out by a public officer," he said in a statement. "It is a function that cannot be delegated or devolved to a private party that has no mandate and is not bound by law to carry out such a delicate task." ***With a report from Norman Bordadora***



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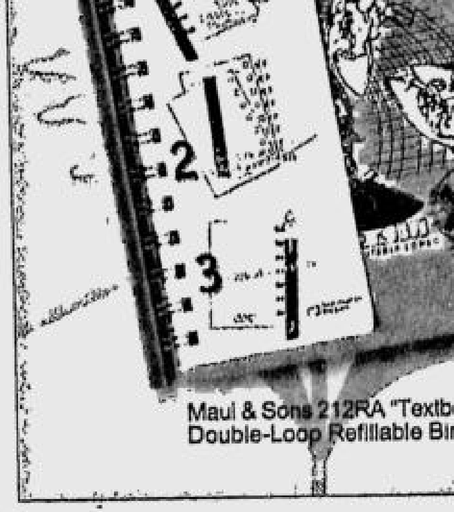

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Spring cops crown

CEBU City—Spring Cooking Oil banked on Jeremy Robinson's last-quarter heroics to turn back ML Kwarta Padala, 85-79, and capture the National Interclub basketball crown Thursday night at the Cebu Coliseum here.

With the high-leaping Robinson leading the offensive, Spring wiped out a seven-point third-quarter deficit and finished off its rivals with a 10-4 spurt in the last two minutes.

"The boys played with a lot of guts. I did not make any adjustments. I just told them to play hard and tough," said Spring coach Tito Palma.

Team owner and national shooting champion Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and his father, Olympian Mariano "Tom" Ong, praised their "stout-hearted players for a job well done."

SPRING 85—Robinson 30, Parks 19, Reyes 11, Ricafuente 9, De Castro 8, Co 6, Buendia 2.

ML KWARTA 79—Laygo 29, Salesman 17, Ferma 11, Aying 7, Trumpeta 6, Carretas 6, Canoneo 2.

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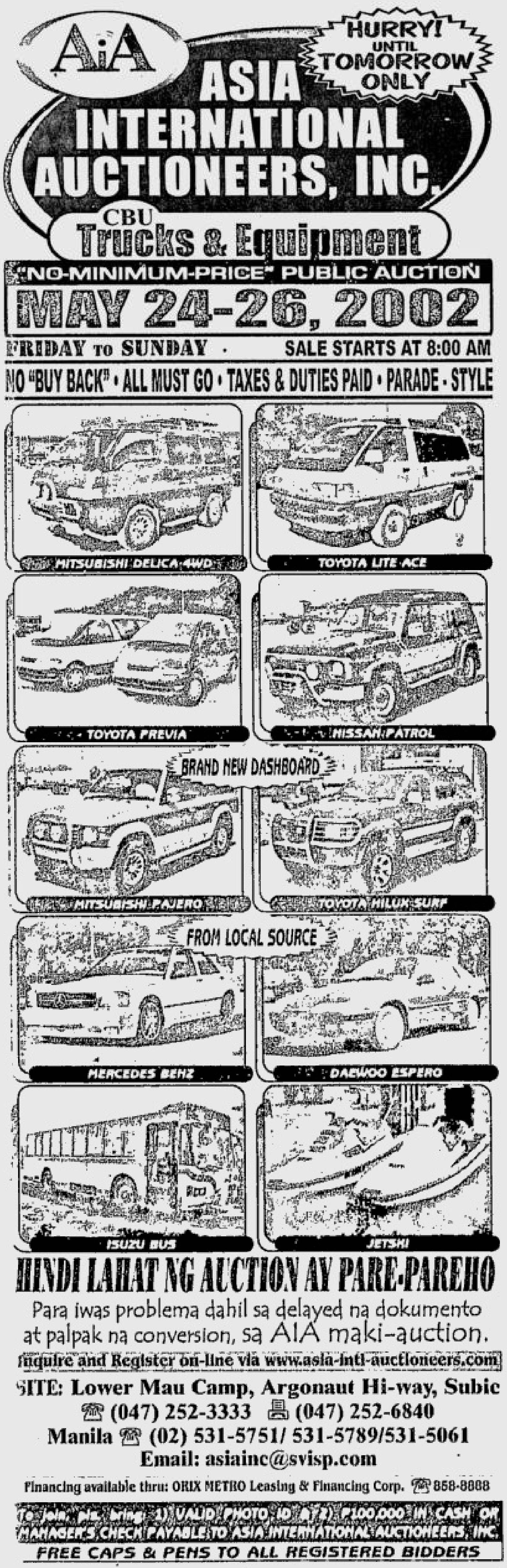
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MBA FINALS

RCPI, LBC begin playoffs

GAME TODAY (USLS Coliseum, Bacolod City)
6 p.m.—RCPI Negros vs LBC Batangas

By Roy Luarca

BACOLOD CITY—The RCPI Negros Slashers have the depth, the firepower and the homecourt advantage. The LBC Batangas Blades have the cohesion and championship poise.

Both teams try to impose their will and style upon the other when they collide at 6 p.m. today in the opener of their MBA First Conference title showdown at the University of St. La Salle Coliseum here.

RCPI Negros, however, will enter the hardcourt as slight favorite over LBC Batangas tonight. A reversal of roles, since the Blades lived up to their favorites' tag when they bested the Slashers in last year's MBA national finals.

Since then, the Slashers have bolstered their roster and are now deemed deeper than the Blades, who were weakened a bit by the departure of ace center Romel Adducul.

True to form, the Slashers topped the elimination phase of the Southern Conference, earning the homecourt edge in their knockout semifinal against the Professional Davao Eagles, 93-90, on May 18.

In contrast, the Blades dropped their first two games before finding their rhythm and barging into the Northern Conference knockout semifinal where they stunned the Olongapo Volunteers, 76-75, on May 19.

The Slashers also beat the Blades, 76-70, in their first meeting this conference on April 13 also at the USLS Coliseum.

RCPI Negros coach Joshua Villapando will again draw strength from frontliners John Feriols, Reynel Hugnatan and Carlo Espiritu, shooters Jose Francisco, Tyrone Bautista and Patrick Benedicto and playmakers Dennis Madrid and Dino Aldeguer.

In addition, Villapando can call on veteran swingmen Ruben dela Rosa and Frechie Ang.

"We're almost even in match-ups even in height, but I believe our depth and homecourt advantage will work for us," said Villapando.

LBC Batangas coach Nash Racela will be relying on Eddie Laure, Jeffrey Sanders, Alex Compton and Tonyboy Espinosa, hero of the Blades' come-from-behind conquest of the Volunteers last Sunday.

The Blades, however, lack depth, being basically an eight-man rotation. Racela's main problem is at the shaded lane where he'll have to make do with Chris Corbin and Ariel de Castro, both of whom are not in Adducul's league.

Meanwhile, MBA Commissioner Chito Loyzaga ordered the implementation of tighter security measures for today's Game 1 and tomorrow's Game 2 in the wake of last week's incident where a bomb was found at the USLS food court after the Slashers' victory over the Eagles.

Ateneo trips Blu; Kutitap sparkles

By Dennis U. Eroa

GAMES MONDAY (Pasig Sports Center)
3 p.m.—Blu vs ICTSI-La Salle
5 p.m.—Shark vs Ateneo-Hapee

RICH Alvarez nailed a difficult jumper, while playmaker Celino Cruz completed a steal as Ateneo-Hapee-Negros Navigation subdued Blu Sun Power, 64-57, last night in the PBL Chairman's Cup semifinals at the Makati Coliseum.

Nursing a slight fever, the 6-foot-4 Alvarez beat the shot clock with a 12-footer off two Blu defenders, while Cruz stripped Lou Gatumbato of the ball for an easy layup as Ateneo posted a comfortable, 64-55 lead, 1:49 left.

The win strengthened Ateneo's hold of the solo leadership with a 9-3 card. Blu dropped to 8-5, same slate of resurgent Kutitap which outgunned Shark Energy Drink, 79-58, in the first game.

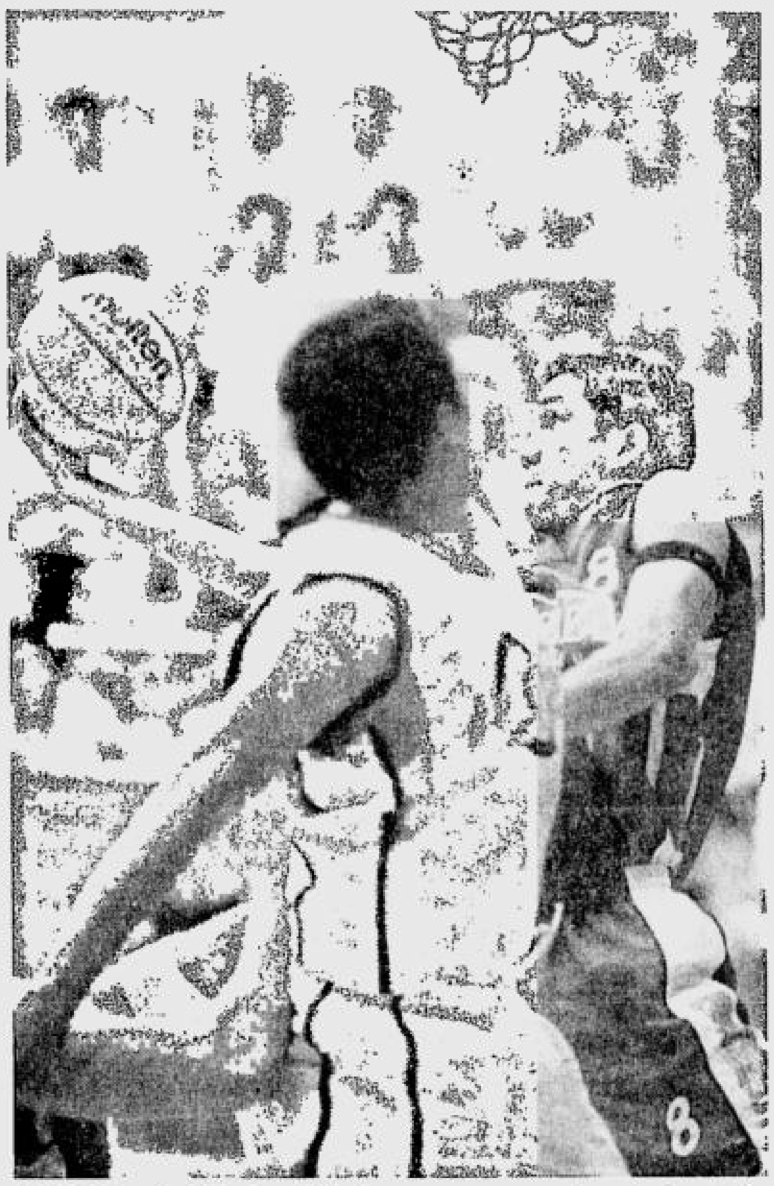
Cyrus Baguio and Nino Gelig starred for the Sparklers, who never relinquished a 26-13 first quarter lead against the Energy Drink Kings, who fell to 6-7. ***With a report from Emil Cabrera***

Scores

KUTITAP 79—Baguio 21, Gelig 18, Saquilayan 10, Jones 7, Catli 6, Mallari 4, Dy 3, Salangsang 3, Razon 3, Sison 3, Luanzon 1, Mercado 0, Rivera 0.

SHARK 58—Bravo 16, Junio 12, Ybañez 7, Cole 6, Caceres 4, Rodriguez 4, Basilides 3, Castro 3, Sotto 2, Ortega 1, Vergara 0.

Quarters: 26-13, 46-25, 66-39, 79-58



CYRUS Baguio of Kutitap (right) attempts a reverse layup in front of Mark Magsumbol of ICTSI-La Salle during their PBL game recently. Kutitap won, 55-48.

ROMY HOMILLADA

Lakers' Bryant ill

EL SEGUNDO, California — Kobe Bryant became ill at practice because of suspected food poisoning, and the Los Angeles Lakers are grateful they have some time before Game 3.

Bryant vomited several times before leaving to see the team doctor Wednesday, two days after playing in a weakened condition in Game 2 against the Sacramento Kings.

"I don't think there's anything that can deter him from playing," coach Phil Jackson said.

The Lakers and Kings are tied 1-1 in the best-of-seven Western Conference finals, with Game 3 Friday night (Saturday morning, Manila time).

The next two games are at Staples Center, where the Lakers have won 19 of 20 games during the last three months and 15 of their last 17 playoff games dating back two years. *AP*

RP to field young athletes in Grand Prix tomorrow

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ASIA'S crème de la crème against the Philippines' budding athletes?

It may be a mismatch of grand proportion, but for athletics chief Go Teng Kok it's a fair game as he vowed to include winners of the recent national open–seniors and juniors alike–in the PCSO-PSC Asian Grand Prix tomorrow at the Rizal oval.

"I'm gambling on the young athletes who showed promise during the recent national open," said Go Teng Kok. "Although I know that they practically stand no chance against the best in Asia, the experience they will gain is invaluable.

"It's like sending them abroad for foreign exposure, only this time, we don't have to spend too much money." Among the new finds are Julie Rose Forbes in hurdles, Loralie Amahit in hammer throw and Maricel Sibog in long jump.

Vice President and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teofisto Guingona was invited to be the guest of honor in the opening rites. Guingona was instrumental in providing visas to the 122 athletes seeing action.

The event is actually the third and last leg of the inaugural Asian Amateur Athletics Association Grand Prix featuring the top six athletes in the region in 15 events. The first two legs were held in India and Thailand, respectively.

Eduardo Buenavista, the lone Filipino who got invited in the elite contest, has won two silvers in the 5,000m and the 3,000m in the previous two legs. On Sunday, however, the Philippines gets the luxury of fielding in at least two athletes in each event as the tournament host.

Events on tap in the one-day affair are men's 400 hurdles; shot put, high jump, 400m, javelin, 800m, triple jump, 100m and 3,000; and women's long jump, 100m, 400m, 800m, discus throw and 100m.

Winners in the event will get $2,000, while the second and third placers win $1,000 and $500, respectively.

Forbes, an 18-year-old from Pitogo, Quezon who takes off with either her left or right leg, won two gold medals both in record fashion, taking the gold in the 100m hurdles and 400m hurdles in setting new juniors marks.

Hoops enrollees to get certificates

THE FIRST several hundred kids who registered for six classes at the Meralco Gym, of the First Bobby Parks Hoops School, will be receiving their certificates of completion for attending the basic basketball program offered by the school on June 1.

Preceding the awarding of certificates will be various competitions for all enrollees, such as 1. The Three-Point Shootout, 2. Three-on-Threes, 3. Five-on-Fives, and 4. The Free Throw Contest. Other awards will also be given to members of the Mythical 5, Best Defensive team, and MVP. Special guests in the field of basketball have also been invited to grace the occasion.

The Hoops School will soon introduce the Advance Basketball Program and the position Specialization Programs—for Big Men (Centers), for Forwards and for Guards.

For future developments, on-line registration, the first on-line hoops store for basketball merchandise, and other information, visit our web site at: www.hoops.ph

Journalists: Bragging about their trip

COMMENTARY

By Vic Vic Villavicencio

FISHING stories and photos appearing in recent newspaper issues all confirm what we've been saying all along: San Vicente, in the town of Santa Ana, Cagayan, is the billfish angling capital of the Philippines.

The handful of journalists who joined us there some weeks back are still bragging about the trip that marked their graduation from light tackle angling to the "big time."

This is definitely a good year in San Vicente. And the news of good fishing days attracted a big field for the May tournament. Show a serious angler some photos, and tell him about big ones landed or those that got away, and he starts packing his bags and his fishing gear.

So what if it takes 15 hours to get to San Vicente from Manila. He does not care. What fires him and gets his adrenalin flowing are his imaginings of somersaulting sailfish at the end of his line. And greedy schools of dorado, line-breaking jacks, wahoo and tuna.

One either takes the one-hour flight to Tuguegarao and takes 2 ½ hour land trip to Santa Ana; or do the land trip with a buddy, alternating driving chores, which is a practical way if only for the fact that one can bring along a good number of ice boxes in which to take back home his catches.

Checking around with other anglers, we have been told of angler groups these days motoring to Laiya in San Juan, Batangas. There's also plenty of dorado offshore, where dorados are, however, in the under-5kg class. Still a real challenge on 12-lb. spinning gear. Some anglers stay close to shore to go bottom fishing for assorted reef fish.

Infanta in Quezon is also mentioned. Using the new highway that cuts through the mountains from Laguna to Real, Quezon, one can get to Infanta in less than three hours from Quezon City. Those who like to discover and try new places might be interested to find what fish broke the line of an angler there last week. Keep in mind the fact that Infanta waters are already part of the Pacific Ocean, home waters of the blue marlin.

Occasional showers could be heralding the habagat season. In a couple of months, it will be *talakitok* hunting time again in Calatagan. And that's why we keep saying we are lucky to be in a country where there is good fishing year-round. (E-mail: vvv@pacific.net.ph).

GREAT COMEBACK FIGHT

Espinosa knocks Colombian out in 2 rounds

FORMER two-time world champion Luisito Espinosa knocked out Ever Beleno of Colombia in the second round of his comeback fight last night at the Compaq Center in San Jose, California.

Espinosa, who lost the WBC bantamweight crown to Mexico's Cesar Soto in El Paso, Texas, in May 1999, improved his record to 46 wins in scoring his 26th knockout. The 36-year-old Béleno suffered his first loss after stringing up eight straight knockouts prior to the bout. He is now 38-10-0.

With the victory, the 34-year-old Espinosa, the only Filipino to win two world titles in two divisions, set himself up for a possible shot at the world crown owned by John Tapia.

Espinosa lost on an eleventh-round technical decision in a title fight against Guty Espadas Jr. in Merida, Mexico on April 14, 2000, before coming back with an impressive fourth-round TKO over Ramon Aragon in October 2001.

He then took a beating at the hands of Augie Sanchez, who won via a fourth-round TKO in January 2001.

The fight was the main card in the first promotion of the legendary Oscar De La Hoya, whose Golden Boy Promotions drew a huge crowd (4,127) at the Compaq Center. The card was billed "Fight Night at the Tank."

Espinosa, now being handled by Noel Rivera, held the WBA bantamweight crown from 1989 to 1991 and the WBC featherweight title from 1995-1999.

Broadcaster Hermie Rivera, Noel's father, was Espinosa's discoverer and manager when Espinosa won the WBA crown.

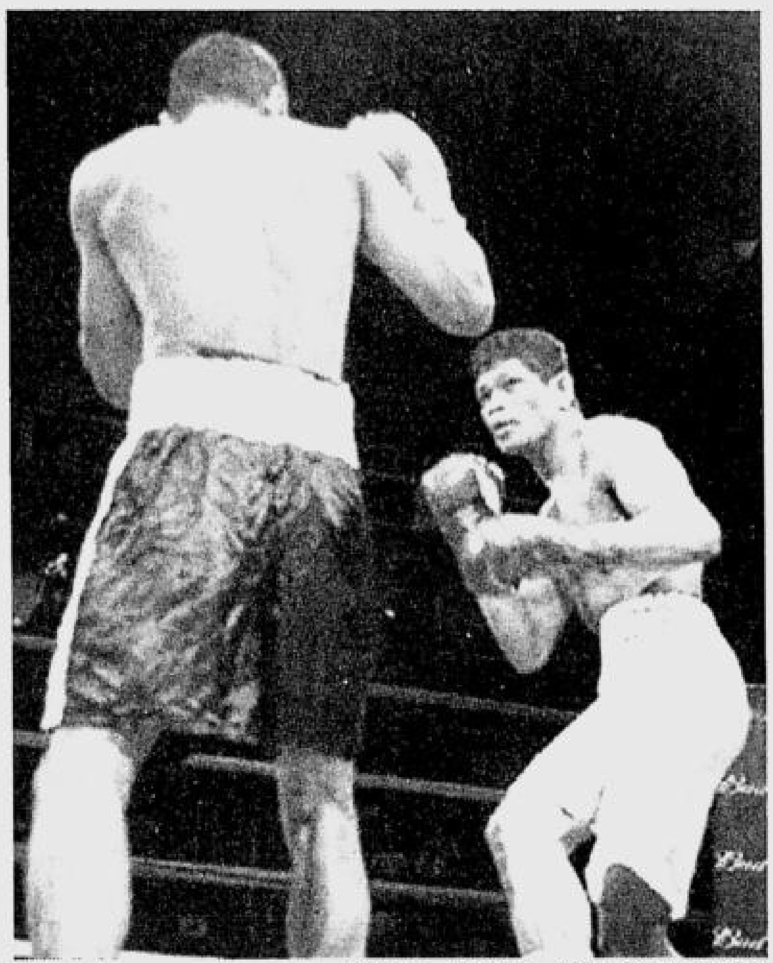
According to American sportswriter Tom Hatheway, Espinosa displayed tremendous power in taking out Beleno.

Writing for fightnews.com, Hatheway said: "Midway into the first round, Espinosa landed a great left-right-left combo that backed Beleno into the ropes. Espinosa continued on with repeated jabs, ending the round with a left cross."

In round two, according to Hatheway, Espinosa came out relying on his left cross to start the action.

With barely a minute gone, the two battled furiously from inside. Then Espinosa sneaked in a left to the chin and followed that up with body blows. Beleno crumpled and fell. He was counted out at 42 seconds of the round.

Wrote Hatheway: "None of the fans were disappointed in the short main event as they had just witnessed a great fight card."



MICHAEL PIMENTEL (WWW.FIGHTNEWS.COM)

ESPINOSA (facing camera) probing Beleno's strength.

Que seeks history vs Delariarte at E. Ridge

By Jong Arcano

ONE to go.

Angelo Que moved a victory shy of rewriting history in the Philippine amateur golf championship after he outplayed Godfredo Sinfuego, 5&3, yesterday in the semifinals at the Faldo course of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

Standing in the way of Que's bid to equal a 30-year-old record in his farewell appearance as an amateur is Jerome Delariarte, a longtime friend.

Delariarte brought down JR Tanpinco, 4&3, to earn another crack at Que two years after losing to him in the finals at Alabang.

Though they have spent so many years training together—shared rooms and even fought wars on and off the course—both said today's showdown would be worth watching.

The 23-year-old Que wasn't even born yet when the legendary Golem Silverio first pulled off the first "three-peat" from 1970-72.

Snead dead at 89

DUBLIN, Ohio— Sam Snead, the golfing great known as "Slammin' Sam" who used the sweetest swing in the game to win seven major championships and a record 81 PGA Tour events, died Thursday at age 89. Snead died at his Hot Springs, Virginia, home at 3:38 p.m. (19:38 MT), his daughter-in-law Anne Snead said.

Ho, Bergavera gain Toby's quarterfinals

XAVIER School's Joshua Tan Ho and Bacolod City's Gerard Bergavera posted easy victories yesterday to reach the boys' 12-under quarterfinals in the Toby's-Philta Age Group Tennis Challenge at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. The fifth-seeded Tan Ho defeated No. 10 Edwin Olivarez, 6-3, 6-1, to advance against top seed Gerard Michael Ngo, a 6-2, 6-2 winner over Jonathan Murrell. The unseeded Bergavera of Negros Occidental Tennis Association whipped No. 13 Tomic Apacible of Ateneo, 6-1, 6-1, to advance against No. 6 Francis Casey Alcantara of Cagayan de Oro, a 6-0, 6-2 winner over no. 11 Raymarc Santiago.

Other winners were no. 2 Patrick Arevalo over Carlos Espedido, 6-0, 6-4; No. 4 Mark Balce over Bernardine Siso, a 6-1, 7-5; No. 7 Gerard Pinili over Jose Lorenzo Opulencia, 7-5, 6-7 (3), 6-2; and No. 8 Gerardo Narvaez over No. 9 Homer Paulo Perez, 6-1, 6-2.

In the unisex 10-under category, third seed Akio Sy of New Life Learning Center blasted Rex Brinas, 6-0, 6-0, to advance in the quarterfinals.

Shell-Yamaha Racing Team completes 3rd sweep

NOTHING can stop Shell-Yamaha now.

Led by the incomparable Ernie Leongson and Jovie Saulog, the multi-titled Shell-Yamaha Racing Team completed its third straight sweep in the WG&A Super Ferry Motocross Series held in Talisay City, Negros Occidental over the weekend.

Riding a trusty Yamaha 250, Leongson swept both heats in the centerpiece pro open category to garner a perfect score of 40 points and pull away in the overall standings to the delight of a wildly cheering crowd.

"It's still to early to tell, but I like my chances now. *Sana magtuloy-tuloy na*," said Leongson, who made the country proud by winning the Guam Smokin Wheel Supercross Championship in Guam last month.

"The whole team is very confident right now. We all want to prove that Shell-Yamaha is really the No. 1 motocross team in the country," added the multi-awarded campaigner from Taytay, Rizal, who rose to prominence by winning the national title in 1994.

Leongson's third straight triumph in the pro open category gave him a runaway score of 111 points after three legs in the series organized by the Hartebeest Entertainment Corp. He also ruled the kickoff leg in Passi, Iloilo and the second leg in Mandaue, Cebu.

SPORTSWATCH

Red and White Golf Cup June 14

THE SAN Beda College Alumni Association Inc. will hold the 2002 Red and White Golf Cup on June 14 at the Alabang Golf and Country Club course. Tee off time is 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Invited in the tournament are all Bedan golfers and friends. Tickets are pegged at P2,500. For details, call Wilma Abellanosa at 753-5995 or Imie Stevens at 809-1780.

Pasa conducts water polo meet

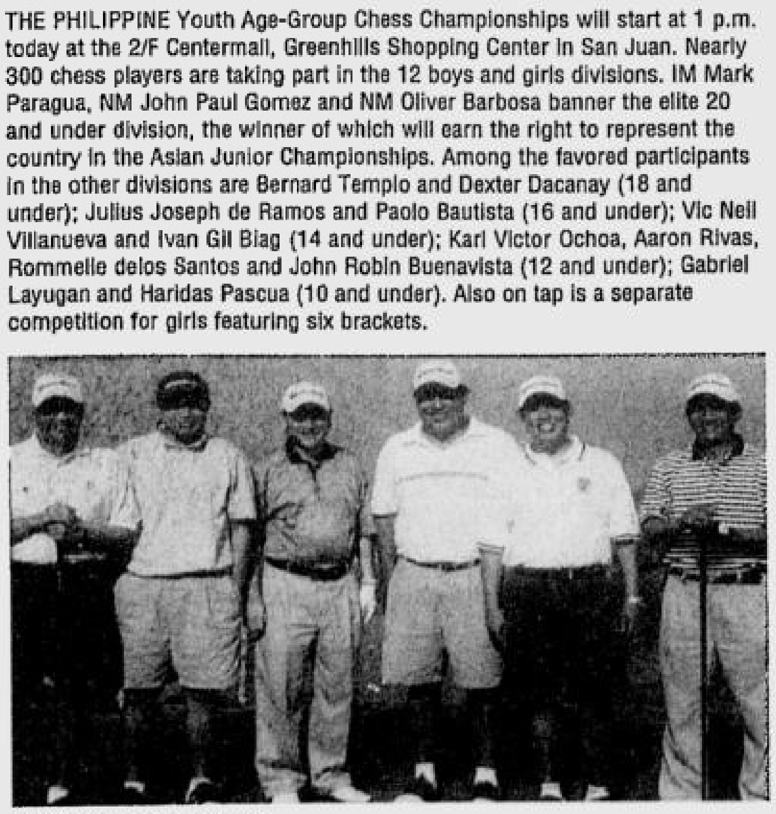
THE PHILIPPINE Amateur Swimming Association will conduct the 1st 5-on-5 Water Polo Age Group competition tomorrow from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex swimming pool. Boys and girls 10U and 15U from San Pablo Mantas, Valle Verde Country Club, Makati YMCA, Mapua, and La Salle Zobel will be competing. Women 25U from UP Diliman, Adamson University, UST and College of St. Benilde will also be part of the tournament. The competition will start with the Water Skills Contest where individual ball handling and specific water polo swim strokes will be evaluated. This will then be followed by the 5-on-5 games. This tournament is supported by the Philippine Sports Commission and the members of the Philippine Water Polo national pool. The public is invited to watch free-of-charge.

Car racing goes to Pantabangan

MAXIMUM off-road car racing takes center stage anew today when the Petron Rallye Series 2002 stages the 51-kilometer second leg up in Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija. Event organizer Activity Asia Association said Vip Isada and navigator Robbie Hermoso are expected to come up with a sterling performance. They ruled the initial leg in Tanay, Rizal with their trusted Honda City racing machine after registering a fast 49-minute, 30-second clocking.

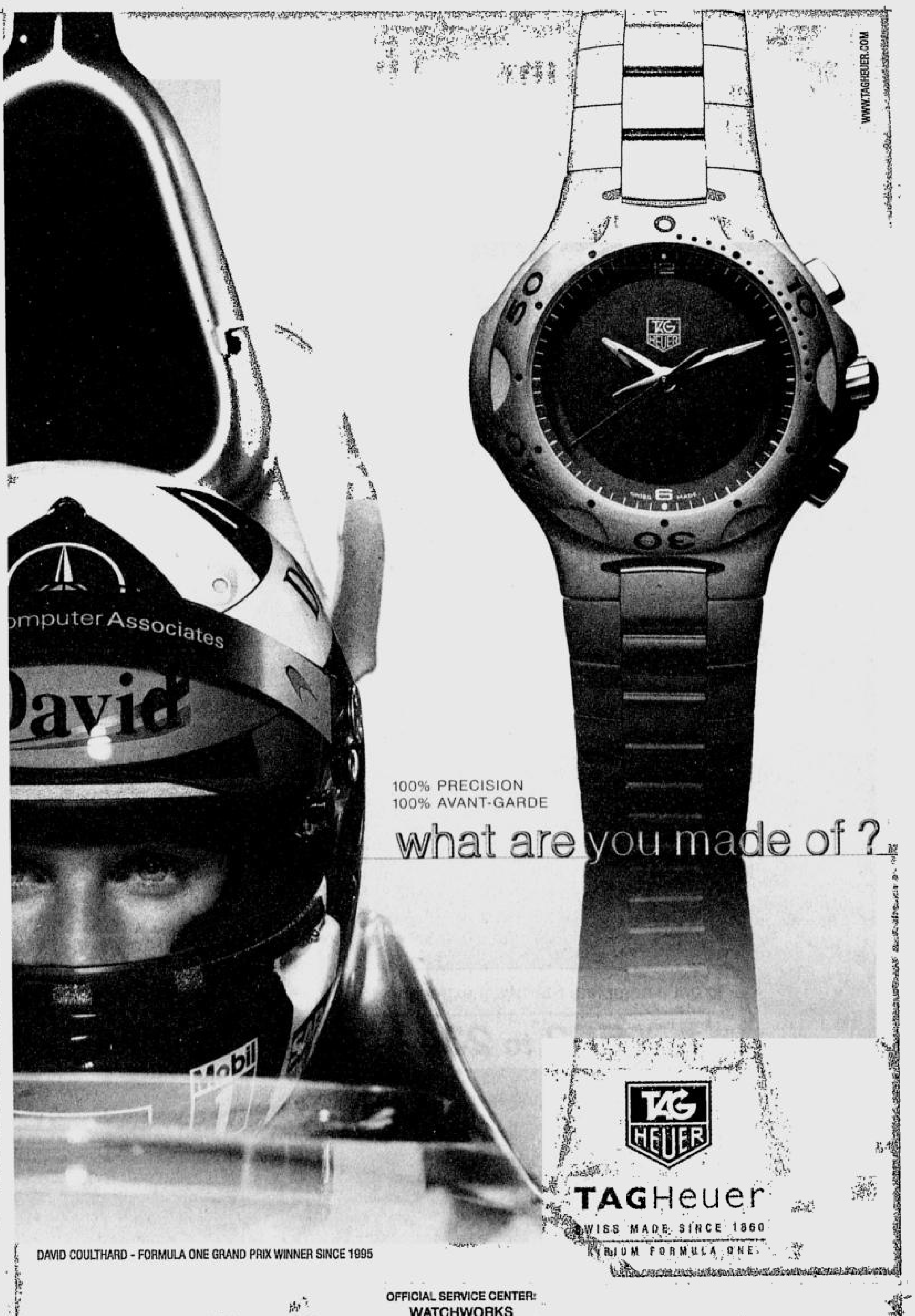
Age-Group chess starts today

THE PHILIPPINE Youth Age-Group Chess Championships will start at 1 p.m. today at the 2/F Centermall, Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan. Nearly 300 chess players are taking part in the 12 boys and girls divisions. IM Mark Paragua, NM John Paul Gomez and NM Oliver Barbosa banner the elite 20 and under division, the winner of which will earn the right to represent the country in the Asian Junior Championships. Among the favored participants in the other divisions are Bernard Templo and Dexter Dacanay (18 and under); Julius Joseph de Ramos and Paolo Bautista (16 and under); Vic Neil Villanueva and Ivan Gil Biag (14 and under); Karl Victor Ochoa, Aaron Rivas, Rommelle delos Santos and John Robin Buenavista (12 and under); Gabriel Layugan and Haridas Pascua (10 and under). Also on tap is a separate competition for girls featuring six brackets.



FOREST HILLS CUP

Forest Hills chair lawyer Ferdinand Santos (third from left) poses with Golforce Inc. president Roberto Escaño, TaylorMade-Adidas marketing manager Jon Legarda, Rizal Rep. Jack Duavit, tournament director Victor Victor de Guzman, and Forest Hills general manager lawyer Romeo Carlos after hitting the ceremonial tee-off to officially open "The Forest Hills Invitational" golf tournament at the Forest Hills Golf Club in Antipolo City. Golforce Inc. and TaylorMade-Adidas are co-presenting Forest Hills' first member-guest golf event.



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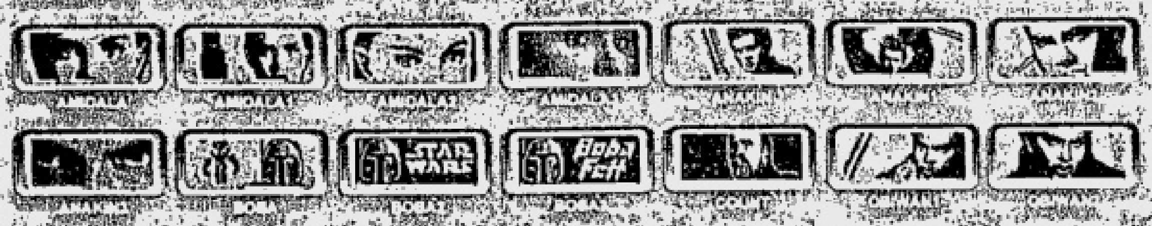

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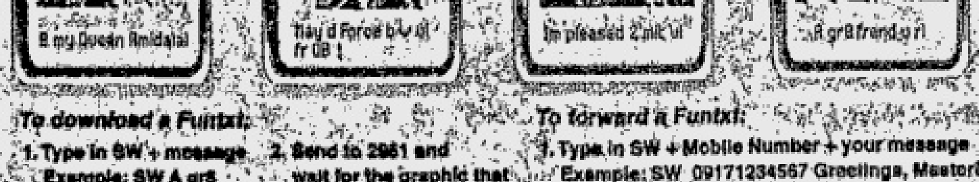
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METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

Transport group wants 50-centavo fare hike

By Agnes E. Donato

THE TRANSPORT group Philippine Confederation of Drivers Organization-Alliance of Concerned Transport Operators (PCDO-ACTO) yesterday filed a petition for a 50-centavo jeepney fare increase before the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB).

If approved, the minimum jeepney fare would increase from P4 to P4.50.

In its three-page petition, the PCDO-ACTO cited as primary reason for its appeal the series of price increase implemented by oil companies over the past few months.

It pointed out that the increase in oil rates triggered a "domino effect," affecting the prices of basic commodities as well as of spare parts for jeepneys.

This, the PCDO-ACTO said, only added to the burden of drivers and small operators who have had to shoulder the oil price increases.

The group said it had no other option but to ask for a fare increase since the LTFRB had

TRANSPORT GROUP /A24

Court runs after running priest

REYES all packed up and ready to go to jail. ERIK ARAZAS

By Agnes E. Donato

RUNNING priest Fr. Robert Reyes is looking forward to going to jail.

As early as yesterday morning, Reyes was already packed and ready to be picked up by policemen who would be serving his warrant of arrest.

Friends kept Reyes company while he awaited his arrest, including Scintilla Juris fraternity member Raymund Narag, who had spent seven years in the Quezon City Jail before he was acquitted in the Dennis Venturina murder case a few months ago.

"Raymund is here to give me last-minute instructions on what to do on my first night in jail," Fr. Reyes told the INQUIRER in jest.

Judge Normandy Pizarro issued the warrant for Reyes' arrest after Assistant City Prosecutor Rossana Montojo recommended the filing of libel charges against the priest before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

The arrest warrant was issued in connection with the P20-million libel suit that Cagayan Rep. Juan Ponce "Jackie" Enrile Jr. filed against Reyes and television host Paolo Bediones before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office last Oct. 23.

Enrile cited Reyes' statement during an interview by Bediones on the TV show "Extra Extra" in which the priest linked the congressman to the killing of the priest's nephew, Ernest Robert Lucas, in 1975.

Reyes was quoted as telling Bediones during the interview: "*Kapag nakita ko si* Juan Ponce Enrile *at si* Jackie Enrile, I'd say you murdered my nephew and no justice was done."

While prosecutor Montojo dismissed the case against Bediones, she favored Enrile's complaint against the priest.

Montojo maintained that Bediones

COURT RUNS/ A24

Wycoco relieves 3 NBI women for shabu loss

By Philip C. Tubeza

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco yesterday relieved of their duties three women NBI officials in connection with the disappearance of shabu from the bureau's evidence room.

Wycoco relieved Forensic Chemistry Division (FCD) acting head Idabel Pagulayan, Dangerous Drugs section chief Constancia Salonga, and evidence custodian Lucia Gonzales for their administrative responsibility in the loss.

Wycoco said the bureau would also charge the three senior officials with gross neglect of duty and misconduct before the Office of the Ombudsman.

"It pains me (to do this) but we all have our responsibilities," Wycoco said.

The NBI director ordered the three women's relief on the initial recommendation of the committee that investigated the loss. NBI intelligence service chief Samuel Ong heads the team.

Ong said 7.37 kilos of shabu are missing from the FDC evidence room.

He said the committee had taken into consideration the small amounts taken from the confiscated shabu for evaluation.

The drug haul initially weighed 247.58 kilograms when it was put into the FCD evidence room, according to the NBI. It now weighs 240.2 kilos.

Wycoco said the three officials alternately held the key to the evi-

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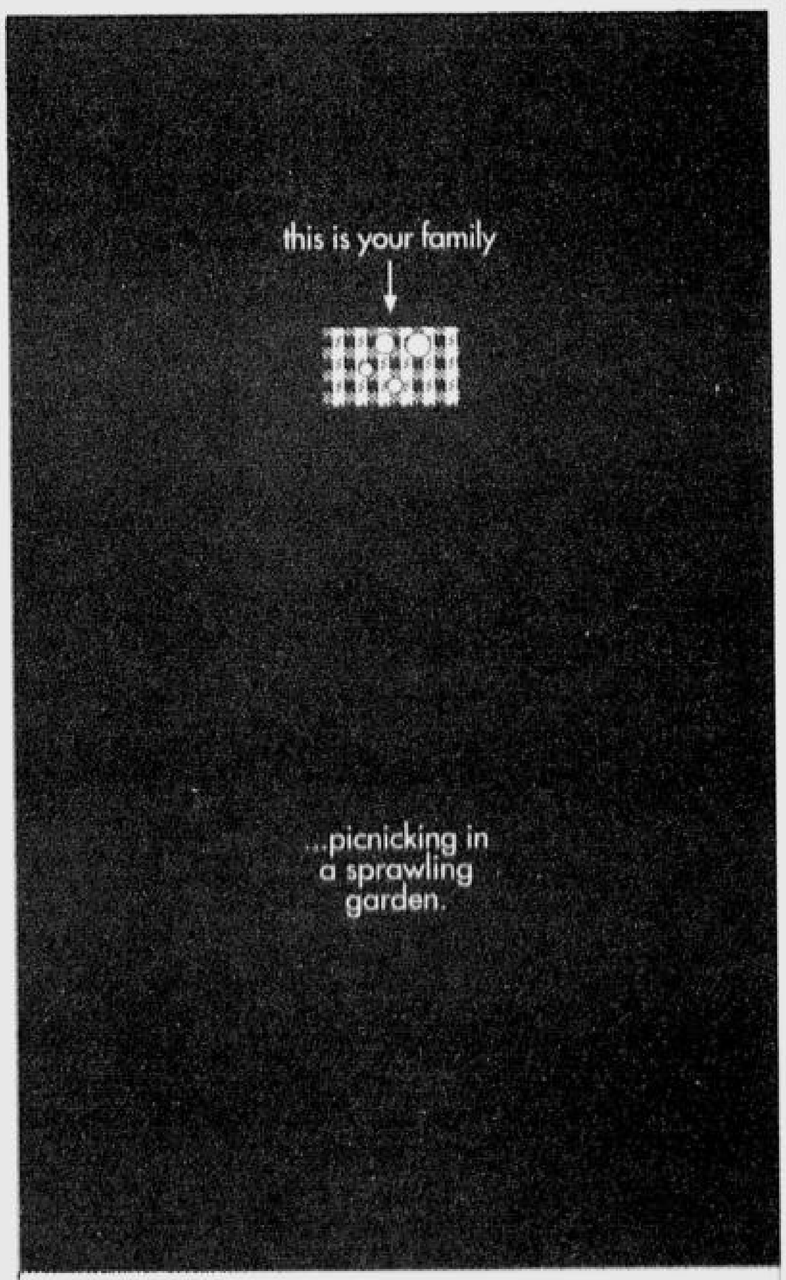

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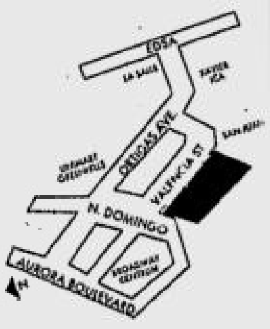

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Land Bank's prexy's arrest illegal

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

SOME legislators suspect Tuesday's blackout that deprived 40 million Filipinos of electricity for hours was intentionally caused by the National Power Corp. and the Manila Electric. They say it was meant to blackmail the government into granting high electricity rates.

If their suspicion is true and it can be proven, Napocor and Meralco officials behind the massive power outage should not be investigated. They should be lined up against the wall and shot! If the government cannot do that because it's unconstitutional, then some vigilante groups should do it for the government.

P"&^%$#@! Sabotage of that magnitude is unforgivable. Those behind it should not be walking around with impunity.

* * *

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is expected to transmit within a month a report to the Philippine government on the results of its inquiry into the alleged money laundering activities of Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

The citizenry is waiting with bated breath whether the allegations of military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus against Lacson are true. Corpus said that the senator, a former henchman of deposed President Erap, kept millions of dollars in the United States.

The FBI report is long overdue. But the US government has withheld the information because it is asking for the extradition of Rep. Mark Jimenez. Jimenez, a crony of Erap, faces several cases in the United States, including tax evasion and illegal campaign contributions.

* * *

*Kung bakit hindi pa kasi ini-*extradite *itong si* Jimenez!

The ball is in the hands of Justice Secretary Hernando Perez. But he's not passing the ball to the United States, eliciting malicious remarks from spectators in the gallery—the citizenry.

Mr. Secretary, please hand Jimenez over to the US government so it will cooperate with us in the investigation of Lacson's alleged money laundering activities.

* * *

No person shall be imprisoned for not being able to pay his debt. That's what the Constitution's Bill of Rights says.

But Land Bank president Margarito Teves was arrested and detained for 10 hours on orders from a quasi-judicial court because of his bank's failure to pay P75 million for 54 hectares of riceland. The riceland was expropriated by the government from landowners under the agrarian reform law.

Teves says the amount being asked by the affected landowners in Cabanatuan City was too much. But Napoleon Baguilat, provincial adjudicator of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in Region 3, thinks the amount was reasonable for the government-expropriated riceland.

* * *

Both the DAR and Land Bank are the implementing agencies in the government's agrarian reform program.

Baguilat could just have threshed out the money problem with Teves instead of issuing an arrest warrant for the bank official.

Is it possible the landowners promised Baguilat a share of the P75 million if he could force Teves to pay up?

* * *

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay accuses Senator Lacson of trying to earn "pogi points" for his 2004 presidential ambition on his proposal to scrap the pork barrel.

Lacson said that the pork barrel was a source of graft among senators and congressmen.

But Pichay justifies the pork barrel—for members of the House of Representatives—because they have to cater to the needs of their constituents.

* * *

A congressman's constituents are the people in his congressional district. Their needs range from construction of barangay roads to setting up basketball courts.

On the other hand, a senator's constituency is the entire population as he was elected by the national electorate.

Pichay is right in saying that congressmen need the pork barrel more than the senators do because they have their immediate constituents to attend to. Senators don't need the pork barrel because the needs of the entire population can be attended to by the national government.

* * *

Besides, the House of Representatives, and not the Senate, allocates the government budget.

If only for that, congressmen should be given the privilege of having a small percentage of that budget.

The privilege of being awarded the purse is given to certain agencies. For example, the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the government No. 1 revenue collection agency, gets a percentage of the taxes it collects from the citizens in the form of intelligence fund.

As to the claim of Lacson that the pork barrel is a source of corruption, which government agency is not corrupt?

* * *

Senior Supt. Roberto Bondoc should be sacked as chief of the Novaliches police station for covering up for his subordinate's crime.

Bondoc justified the shooting to death of a barangay kagawad Hermie Galicia by PO1 Garvin Mendi inside the station by saying the cop was just defending himself. Galicia attacked Mendi with a knife, the station commander said.

Horse manure! Why would a barangay kagawad attack a cop inside a station for no apparent reason?

* * *

Galicia was at the police station to intercede for his constituent, Joswin Senoc who was arrested and beaten up by Mendi for a traffic violation.

Galicia angered Mendi when he advised Senoc to file a criminal case against the cop for illegal arrest and physical injuries.

Police officials like Colonel Bondoc should be fired along with abusive subordinates they're tolerating.

Bondoc and his ilk increase the membership and sympathizers of the New People's Army.

Pasay dads tighten screws on projects

By Christian V. Esguerra

AFTER they were allegedly excluded in consultations on the construction of a new airport terminal, Pasay City councilors are now eager to make their presence felt and vow to personally look into infrastructure projects in the city.

Members of the city council have filed a resolution that will give them the authority to inspect projects at the reclamation area and at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and its Terminal 3.

They said the inspections will enable them to personally check if the projects, sponsored either by the national government or by private companies, are complying with the National Building Code, fire safety standards, and other city policies.

They pointed out that the "lenient" implementation of safety rules has enabled project proponents to "circumvent" these policies.

"There are now several infrastructure projects being undertaken by the national government and (by a) private entity in the reclamation area without the knowledge of the Sangguniang Panlungsod," the councilors said in the proposed resolution.

Councilor Allan Panaligan, chair of the committees on public works and engineering, earlier slammed airport officials for bypassing the city council in the controversial Terminal 3 project.

Had the Manila International Airport Authority coordinated with the Pasay government about the project much earlier, the new airport terminal would not have been bogged down by complications the way it is. today, Panaligan said.

City residents and authorities are strongly against two key components of the terminal.

Residents of Barangay 201 have rejected the transfer of the airport's aviation fuel facility to the area, fearing that it would be an easy target for terrorists.

Villamor residents have also opposed the construction of transmission lines in their area, claiming the facility would generate an electromagnetic field which might cause health problems.

The city council has yet to decide whether to give the go-signal on the transfer of the fuel depot and construction of the transmission lines.

Students want Ched officials to quit

By Jerome Aning

STUDENT groups yesterday called for the resignation of top officials of the Commission on Higher Education for their "consistent failure" to regulate school fees and monitor tuition increases in private schools.

"(Ched) officials ... have already lost the confidence of the constituents they purportedly serve," said Raymond Palatino, president of the National Union of Students of the Philippines.

The NUSP, together with the Student Christian Movement of the Philippines and the League of Filipino Students, said Ched chair Ester Garcia and executive director Roger Peres should have the "delicadeza" to quit.

The Manila-based student groups, many of whose members go to schools in the city's University Belt, vowed to stage rallies and press for the officials' resignation at the opening of classes next month.

"Ched's admission that it cannot run after abusive private schools or control tuition makes it a lameduck institution," Palatino said. "With the public uproar over the new round of tuition hikes, the right thing to do for these officials who have publicly admitted their failure is to step down."

SCMP chair Bayani Alonzo II said private school owners have "made tuition increase the easiest road to amass profit at the expense of the students."

About 357 private universities—94 of them in Metro Manila—are set to hike tuition next school year, according to the student groups.

This number, they said, does not include schools that have jacked up miscellaneous fees without the knowledge of Ched officials.

The SCMP said aside from the tuition increases, students are burdened with exorbitant fees of all sorts, ranging from laboratory fees, energy fees and student fees, to "ridiculously invented fees for the sole purpose of exacting money from students."

The NUSP listed other "crimes" of the commission such as failing to check and punish schools that conduct bogus consultations on tuition.

The groups also accused Ched of failing to act with dispatch against schools that allegedly trample on students' rights in campuses.

Court runs after running . . .

From page A23

"merely acted as an introductory narrator." Reyes' statement, she said, "appeared to be libelous."

Fr. Reyes yesterday told the Inquirer that the killing of Ernest Robert was very painful for him because the younger man was not only his nephew but also one of his closest friends.

"He was 19 then, I was 20," the priest said. "We grew up together and we were really close friends."

Ernest Robert was shot dead while he was fetching his sister who had attended a party of St. Scholastica and Ateneo de Manila University students in a house in San Lorenzo Village, Makati on Sept. 21, 1975.

"No justice was ever done to my nephew," the priest said. "All the people involved, including all eyewitnesses, just evaporated. I'd really want to know who's behind it."

Although Reyes said the arrest warrant came at a bad time, he showed little indication that he resented it.

He stayed all day in his parish, the Parish of the Holy Sacrifice in UP Diliman, waiting for the arresting officers.

He said he planned to stay in jail over the weekend, partly so he could interact with the prisoners there. He would be posting his P10,000 bail on Monday, as he needs to prepare for the defense on Friday of his dissertation for his Ph.D. in Anthropology studies in the University of the Philippines, he said.

His only worry was that he was not able to be with his father when the latter had a triple bypass yesterday.

"I really need to be around my parents at this time," Reyes said, adding that he had a hard time telling his mother about the arrest warrant.

Support for the priest began to gather as soon as news about his pending arrest was reported.

Bishop Soc Villegas had called him up to express his support while Jesuit Provincial Romeo Intengan of the Ateneo de Manila University had offered assistance in his legal defense.

A group of priests in Australia also expressed plans to hold a run to raise funds for the running priest's court battle.

PADLOCKED

Local government agents sent by Pasig City Mayor Soledad Eusebio close the Capitol Allied Gas Corp. refilling station on Evangelista Street in Barangay Santolan after residents complained of foul odor coming from the station. The mayor's office said the station had been sent two notices of violations for operating without clearances.

Councilor has anti-truancy bill

A MANILA councilor has devised a scheme that would prevent truancy among children in the city's public schools.

In a proposed ordinance, Councilor Amalia Tolentino wants to require law enforcers — policemen, barangay and others — to be on the lookout for children who skip classes.

"Some steps have to be made to ensure that schoolchildren attend their classes religiously," she said.

Most public elementary and high schools hold classes in twd to three shifts—morning, afternoon and evening.

The fourth district councilor said a law enforcer who sees any child of school age in the vicinity of a school must determine if the child is a public school student.

If the child says he is and cannot show proof that he does not have classes, the lawman should bring the student to school officials, Tolentino said.

Jerome Aning

ACCUSING FINGERS

A young girl points at Joel Gomez and Ariel Andrada who she says sexually molested her and other girls in Sta. Ana, Manila. Holding on to the suspects is Supt. Co Yee Co, commander of the Western Police District Station 6. ERIK ARAZAS

Transport group . . .

From page A23

junked an earlier petition of various transport groups for the abolition of the oil deregulation law.

One LTFRB board member admitted that the petition was not without reason, considering that oil companies have raised their prices by almost P2 since March.

But board member Felix Racacho said it would take some time before the fare increase, if approved, could be implemented.

He explained that the petition would have to go through a long process, which includes a series of public hearings.

Earlier, other transport groups such as the Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operator Nationwide (Piston) and the Integrated Metro Bus Operators Association (IMBOA) also announced plans to raise their fares.

Wycoco relieves . . .

From page A23

dence room.

Pagulayan held the key on weekends while the two others took turns in keeping it on weekdays, he said.

"In fairness to these custodians, they consented to take the polygraph test (lie detector exam)," Wycoco said.

"They passed the test when they were asked if they were involved in the pilferage," he said.

He said the three officials would be reinstated if the continuing investigation shows that the shabu was taken when it was not in their custody.

Wycoco said their relief constitutes the first phase of the investigation. The special investigating committee is now trying to find out who pilfered the shabu, he said.

"I told them to find out who took the drugs so that we can file criminal charges against them," he said.

He said "all personnel from the NBI Special Task Force (STF) and the FCD technical service" would be investigated.

The STF was the unit that confiscated the shabu during a raid in Pasay City in December 2000.

"We will be looking into all logbooks and check who conveyed the shabu to court as evidence during the hearings," Wycoco said.

He said the committee would also review the press conference during which the shabu was presented to the media, and would check if part of the haul could have been taken then.

NBI sources earlier said the shabu was taken while it was being conveyed from the bureau to the courts.

2 Caloocan cops accused of threatening 2 GROs

By Tina Santos

TWO rookie policemen are now in jail for allegedly threatening to kill two guest relations officers (GROs) early Tuesday morning in Caloocan City.

PO2 Alberto Eustaquio of the Caloocan police identified the suspects as PO1s Erwin Cruzada Bagsac, 26, of Dagat-dagatan, Caloocan, and Proceso Docdoc Baquial, 26, of Marikina City. Both are assigned to the District Mobile Force of the Northern Police Disrict Office, Eustaquio said.

Police said the two policemen were drinking in a VIP room of the Simple Pleasure Videoke Bar and Restaurant on Mabini Street in Sangangdaan, Caloocan City, when they suddenly accused GROs Clarisse Gonzales, 22, and Annalyn Gonzalez, 18, of putting cigarette butts in their drinks.

The two men reportedly showed off their firearms and threatened to kill the girls.

They allegedly asked for the club manager while they cursed the GROs, police said.

The club manager sought the help of patrolling policemen who immediately arrested the suspects and seized their firearms. The suspects will be charged with grave threats, PO2 Eustaquio said.

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Mr. Robby Tulus, *Consultant, NTUC Income, former ICA-ROAP Director,*

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Mr. Danny Consuegra
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Ms. Teresita de Leon, Int'l Labour Organization Coop-Net Coop Reform Program for Asia & the Pacific
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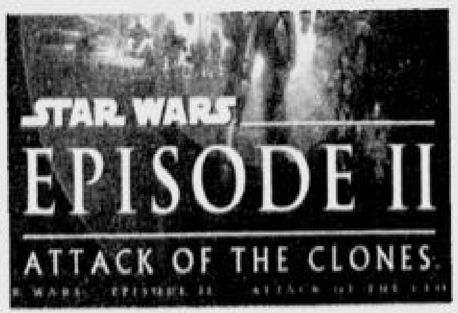

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Jancom deal renegotiation illegal, says Plunder Watch

By Alcuin Papa

ANY revision or renegotiation of the controversial Jancom garbage deal will be immoral, illegal and unjust, according to the civic group Plunder Watch, which recently added its voice to those opposed to the deal.

"Because the original contract is so disadvantageous, any revision will still give Jancom and its accomplices billions in illegal, immoral and unjust profits," said Plunder Watch in a statement.

Romulo Abaya, Plunder Watch convenor, recently delivered the statement before the House body investigating the deal.

He pointed out to members of the congressional committee on ecology that the "contract was done through irregular means—a result of a rigged bidding process—and lacked the approval of the National Economic Development Authority's ICC (Investment Coordination Committee)."

He also accused Jancom officials of "influence-peddling," and cited the Supreme Court decision favoring the garbage deal.

"(There are) suspicions of influence-peddling, via current and former partners of the powerful Carpio-Villarasa law office, specifically Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio, Presidential Legal Counsel Nonong Cruz, and Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo," Abaya said. "Carpio and company were involved one way or another in the Jancom deal since its inception."

According to Abaya, they are afraid that "influential parties" might persuade President Arroyo to sign the garbage deal despite her pronouncements that she would not because the contract was "flawed."

The Plunder Watch convenor claimed Jancom officials are "known to be golfing buddies of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo."

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority officials are at present renegotiating the controversial $350-million garbage deal with Jancom. Specifically, the MMDA wants the garbage contractors to use landfills instead of incinerators, and lower their original tipping fee of $32 to around $20 per ton.

Civic groups are opposed to the original and renegotiated deals, alleging that these would defraud government of P390 billion.

The civic groups also said that the contract violated the Clean Air Act and other environmental laws passed by Congress.

Jancom officials denied the charges, saying the deal, which will solve Metro Manila's garbage problem, is only worth $350 million.

BLACKOUT BOARD GAME

While the rest of Luzon was sweltering during the region-wide blackout earlier this week, these boys cooled down with a little board game right on the ground on NIA Road in Quezon City. DENNIS SABANGAN

PPA 'war' must not end like this

LET'S hope the raging controversy over the PPA (power purchase adjustment) will not end like this incident over an electric bill.

Because they could not agree on how they would split their electric bill, two neighbors fought in Navotas on Thursday. One was killed and the other was seriously injured, police said.

Lamberto Mariano, 28, of Tabing Dagat, was declared dead on arrival at the Tondo Medical Center, police said. His neighbor Joel Ibanez, 28, is in serious condition in a hospital.

PO2 Rafael Espadero said the two men were drinking near their houses when they started arguing over who should pay their P1,500 electric bill.

The two men, whom witnesses said were both drunk, continued to quarrel until Mariano took a piece of wood and hit Ibanez in the head. Ibanez struck back by stabbing Mariano in the chest, police said.

Tina Santos

Dad wants ban on sidewalk storage

By Jerome Aning

BUILDING owners and contractors would no longer be able to use Manila's sidewalks and streets to store their construction materials, if a city councilor were to have her way.

In a proposed ordinance, Councilor Ma. Theresa Bonoan-David wants contractors and building owners to first secure a permit from City Hall before they can use city property to store construction materials such as hollow blocks, steel rods, sand and gravel, as well as the resulting debris from demolition and repair work.

David said construction materials on streets and sidewalks not only contribute to traffic congestion, they also endanger lives.

The fourth district councilor said City Hall has the right to collect fees for the private use of government property.

Under the bill, the city building official will be tasked to issue permits for the use of sidewalks, streets and public places, such as parks and barangay basketball courts.

A fee of P4,500 a month shall be paid for the use of a portion of a sidewalk not more than 20 square meters. About P200 more shall be added to the fee for every additional square meter.

For alleys, streets and other public places, the fee is P7,500 a month for the use of space measuring not more than 20 sq. m. An additional P500 shall be paid for each square meter used.

David said the applicant must also deposit to the treasurer's office P1,000 for using between 1 and 10 linear meters of public property and an additional P500 for every 10 linear meters.

This amount will be refunded to the applicant after the building official issues a certificate that the premises used were cleaned and cleared of any debris and that there was no damage to the infrastructure.

The building official, however, may not issue a permit authorizing the occupancy of more than 15 percent of the right of way.

Violators may be fined from P1,000 to P2,500, sentenced to jail for three to six months, or both.

The council committees on laws, engineering and public works are now studying David's proposal.

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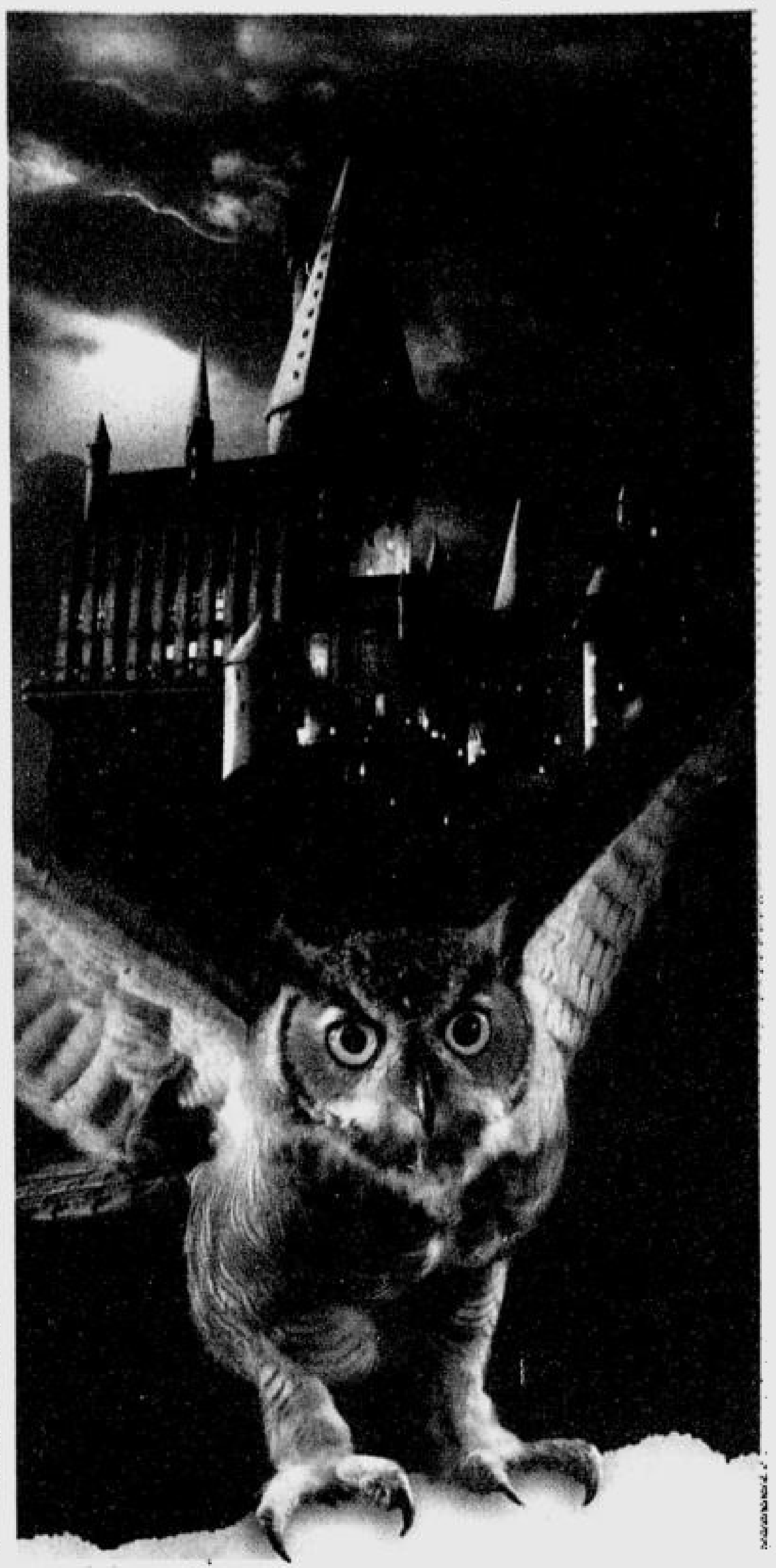

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(s02)

Worker dies in septic tank electrocution

By Philip C. Tubeza

CONSTRUCTION worker Ricky Olis, 25, was electrocuted while cleaning a septic tank in Manila on Thursday afternoon, according to police.

Olis, a native of Valencia, Negros Oriental, was electrocuted while screwing on an incandescent bulb at a construction site in Binondo, said Detective Athos Lim de Quiros of the Western Police District-homicide section.

Olis was working at the Evergold marketing construction site at the corner of Laboreros and Sto. Cristo streets in Binondo, De Quiros said.

The man and his coworkers were declogging a septic tank in the basement when Olis decided to scrub the walls around the septic tank. Since it was dark, he decided to screw a light bulb into a socket.

Unfortunately, he did not notice that he had stepped into a watery area, police quoted the other workers as saying.

"His co-workers Michael Mateo and Bienvenido Cesalda saw what happened and were shocked," De Quiros said.

When the two men regained their senses, they pulled the extension wire connected to the socket.

They lifted Olis' body and brought him to the Gat Andres Bonifacio hospital but they were too late. Olis was declared dead on arrival.

The victim's body was taken to a funeral parlor for autopsy, De Quiros said.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	AKALA MO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BENEATH LOCHNESS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	STAR WARS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SPIDERMAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	STAR WARS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	FRUIT IS SWELLING
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	DEATH TO SMOOCHY
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	SPIDERMAN
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	STAR WARS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	KAULAYAW / SNAKE CHARMER
ODEON	STAR WARS
ODEON-2	SANA TOTOO NA
ROBEN	SANA TOTOO NA
TANDEM-1	ITLOG
TANDEM-2	IKA-7 GLORYA
TIMES	OCEAN 11 / ALI
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	SANA TOTOO NA
REMAR	AKALA MO
REMAR-2	STAR WARS
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	SANA TOTOO NA
B	KAPIRASONG GUBAT . . .
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	SANA TOTOO NA
CINEMA-2	BUKANG BIBIG
CINEMA-3	K-PAX
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	STAR WARS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SPIDERMAN
CINEMA-6	JASON-X
CINEMA-7	VIDEOKE KING
CINEMA-8	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	STAR WARS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	STAR WARS
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	STAR WARS
CINEMA-12	SPIDERMAN
CINEMA-14	SPIDERMAN
CINEMA-15	SPIDERMAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SPIDERMAN
CINEMA-2	IN THE BEDROOM
CINEMA-3	STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
CINEMA-4	STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
CINEMA-5	DEATH TO SMOOCHY
CINEMA-6	STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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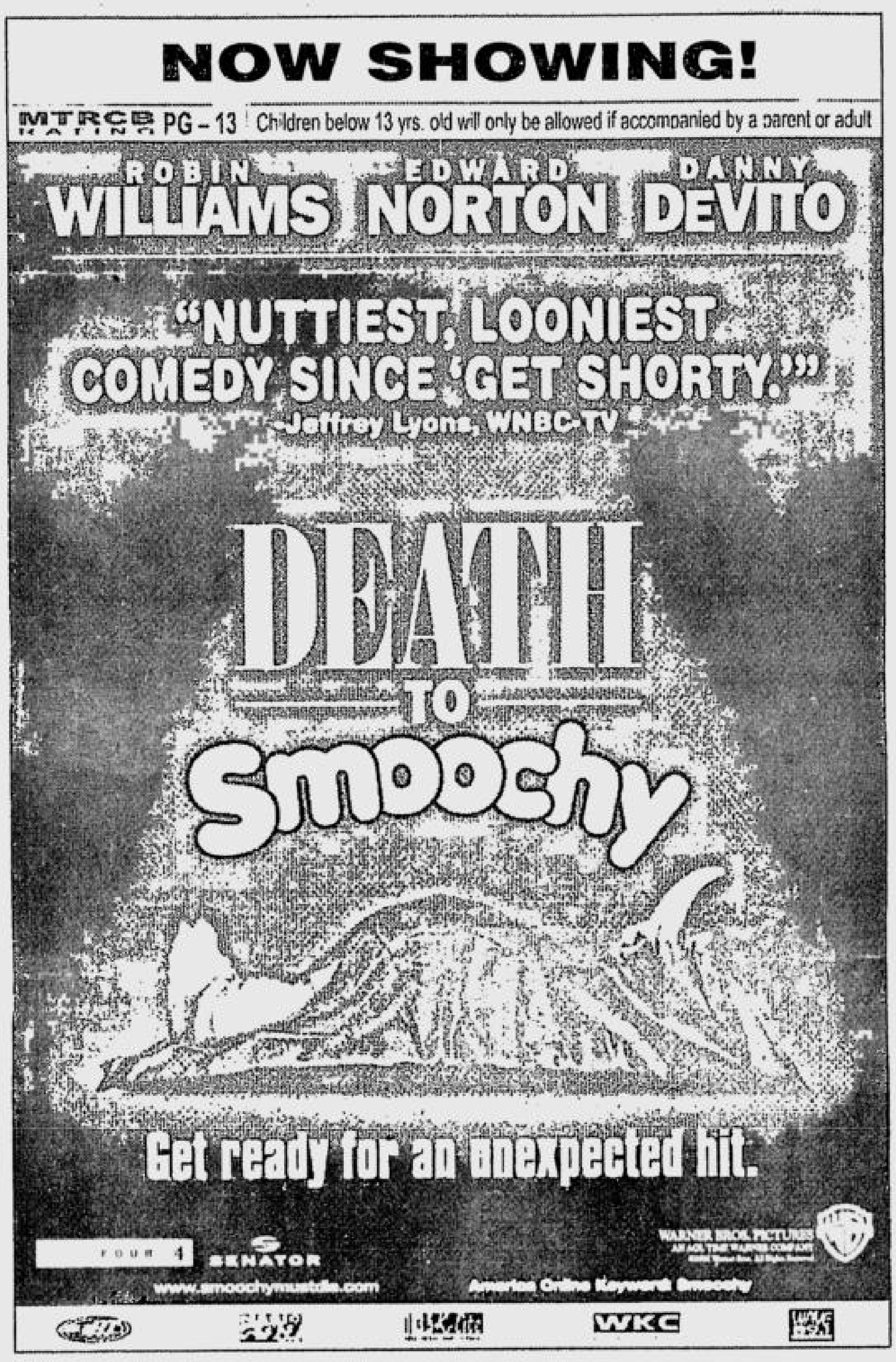
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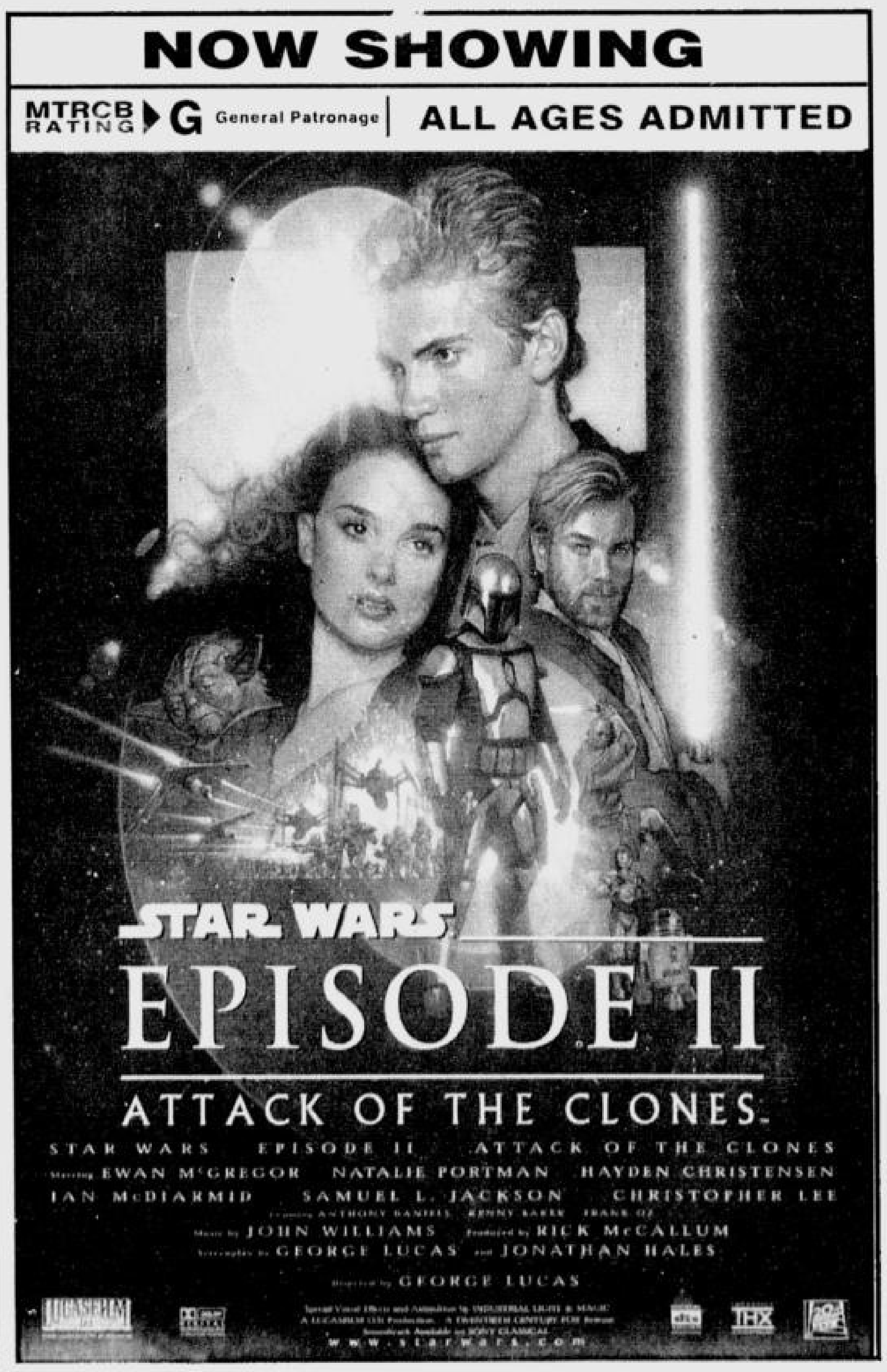
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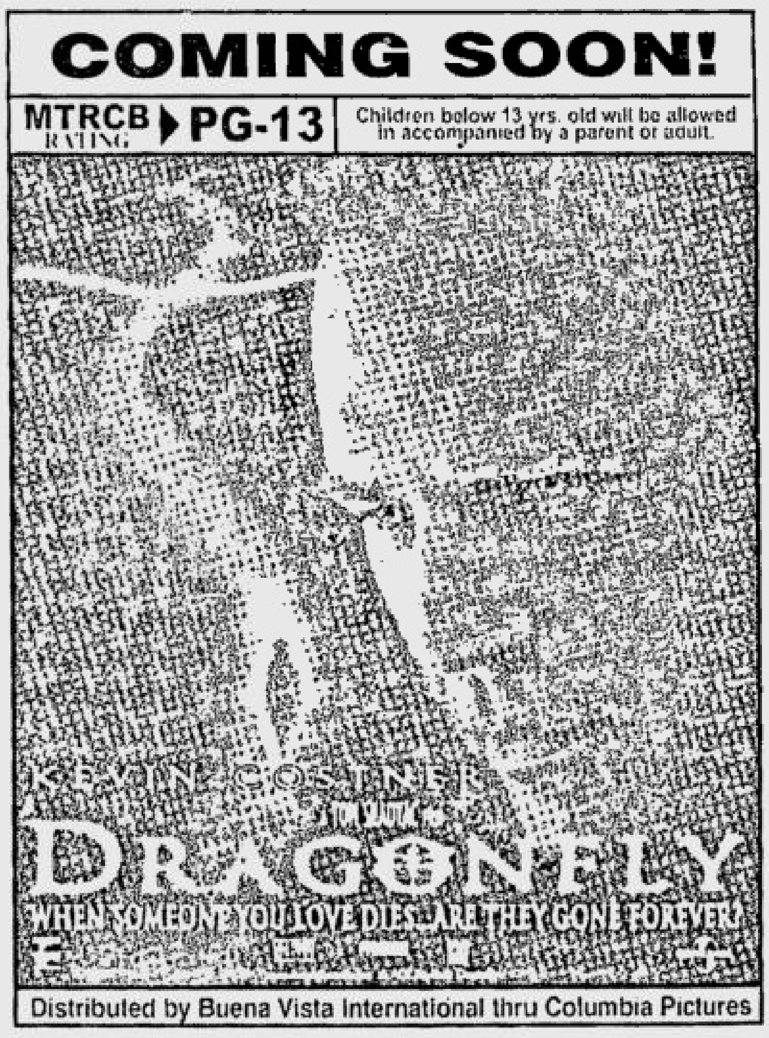
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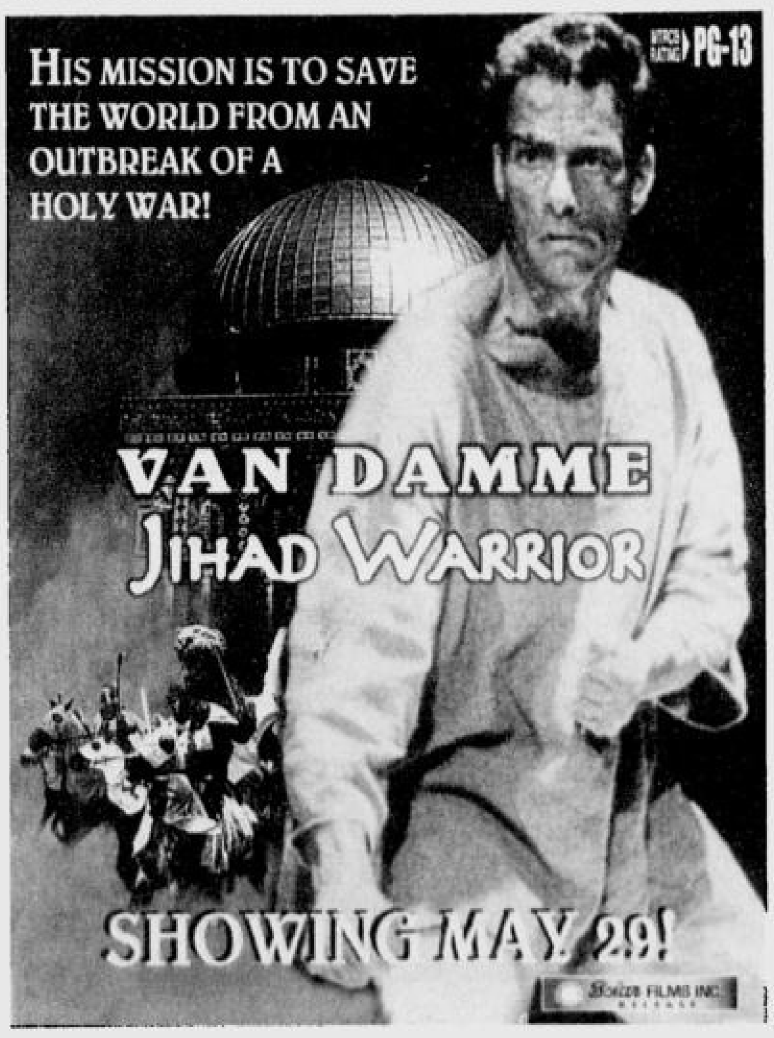
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Japanese found dead in Malate

By Philip Tubeza

A JAPANESE real estate consultant was found dead and naked at the Legaspi Towers in Malate, Manila on Thursday night.

Masahiro Fujita's girlfriend, a guest relations officer, found his body at about 11:45 p.m. in the bathroom where the shower was still running.

Fujita, 44, who stayed in Room 11-M of the Legaspi Towers, at the corner of Roxas Boulevard and Vito Cruz Street in Malate, apparently died of a heart attack, said Detective Virgo Villareal of the Western Police District homicide section.

Fujita's friend, Liezel Abremate, 19, told police the foreigner earlier complained to her that he felt tired after playing golf.

Fujita, a Kanejin Corp. consultant, invited Abremata to his room early Thursday evening.

Abremata said she had known Fujita since March. She said he had been in the country for over a year.

She told police that she and the Japanese only talked and ate pizza and chicken. She claimed she went to sleep on the sofa and that nothing happened between them that night.

She said Fujita did not drink any alcohol, and only had ice tea.

Abremata said she woke up at 11:45 p.m. and heard the shower running in the bathroom.

She opened the door and was shocked to find the victim "face down on the floor in a sitting position."

Abremata said she tried to lift Fujita until she realized that he was no longer breathing.

She said she called up the building's security, who reported the incident to the police.

Dr. Romeo Salen, the WPD medico-legal, said the victim's body bore no sign of external injuries.

Fujita's body was later taken to the Tres Amigos Funeral Parlor in Paco.

"He might have died due to a heart attack, but we'll wait for the autopsy report to confirm that," Detective Villareal said.

Manila launches save-the-Bay regattas

By Jerome Aning

THE MANILA city government will hold its first sea sports festival featuring several regattas in Manila Bay starting tomorrow.

Mayor Lito Atienza said the activity, dubbed the "Mayor's Cup Regatta," aims to raise public consciousness of the importance of saving the bay from pollution and reclamation.

"We in Manila are very fortunate that we have a bay area," the mayor said. "This event would put at the forefront the present condition of Manila Bay and the need to save it."

The festival starts at 7 a.m. tomorrow. It will feature a dragon boat race, a remote control model boat race and a mirror race. A mirror is a two-person sailboat that has two sails, a main sail and a jib.

The boat races will be preceded by a special demonstration of the air and special warfare groups of the Philippine Navy.

Atienza said the city government continues to work with other government agencies, nongovernment organizations and volunteer groups in saving the bay.

He said that when he was vice mayor in 1992, he successfully pushed for an ordinance prohibiting any reclamation of the bay from the Cultural Center of the Philippines Complex to the United States Embassy.

City Hall has even endorsed a survey of the Manila Bay to delineate Manila's jurisdiction so that the city could implement laws to protect the body of water's ecology and regulate activities in it.

Councilors sued by their mayor

TAGUIG Mayor Freddie Tinga yesterday filed libel suit against Councilors Noel Dizon and Carlos Catacio in connection with the latter's press statement about Tinga's recent three-day trip to Hong Kong.

According to a statement from the mayor's office, on May 19, 2002, news articles were published in several newspapers (not the Inquirer) regarding the "educational trip" of the town's public school principals with the mayor in Hong Kong on May 16-18, 2002.

Dizon described the trip as "suspicious" and tried to link it to the forthcoming barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections.

Catacio tried to cast doubt on the real purpose of the trip, which he called a junket, according to Tinga's statement.

In his complaint affidavit filed before the provincial prosecutor of Rizal, Tinga called the allegations of the two councilors "false and baseless, obviously animated as they were by a pervasive evil intent to destroy his reputation and put his administration in a bad light or even in disrepute."

Tinga in his statement accused the two councilors of "falsely insinuating that the principals and teachers would not gain anything" from the Hong Kong trip.

He pointed out that according to acknowledged education experts, the Hong Kong educational system is one of the best in Oceania, which is composed of the Asia-Pacific region and Australia.

"This is the main reason why I chose Hong Kong for the study-tour of the principals, aside from the fact that it is the closest to the Philippines, which makes the trip least expensive compared to the cost of trips to the rest of the Asia-Pacific region," Tinga explained.

He said the trip was officially arranged by the local government, the Department of Education and the Hong Kong Tourism Board.

Tinga is seeking P2 million in damages.

Worker hurt in fall

A CONSTRUCITON worker was injured when he fell from the second floor of a building under construction in Makati City on Wednesday.

Christopher Cordita, 31, a mason of Form Tech Builders Corp., fell from the second floor of Globe Telecom building on Valero Street in Salcedo Village, police said. He sustained a deep gash in the head and was being treated at the Makati Medical Center.

PO2 Juvenal Barbosa of the Makati City police homicide section said Cordita was taking out steel catwalks on the second floor when he lost his balance and fell. Witnesses said Cordita's back was first to hit the ground and his head and neck hit a piece of wood. *Alcuin Papa*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, May 25, 2002
7th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **James 5:13-20**
Gospel: **Mk 10:13-16**

People were bringing their little children to him to have him touch them, and the disciples rebuked them for this.

When Jesus noticed it, he was very angry and said, "Let the children come to me and don't stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." Then he took the children in his arms and laying his hands on them, blessed them.

Commentary

We are still shocked by the news of so many "child abuse" cases. Child labor, child soldiers, street children, child pornography, abandoned children. How could Jesus, who asks us to love and hope, forget the children who are also our hope and need most of our love? Little children are symbol of totally defenseless people, like the weak and the poor, who are to be the first according to Jesus' new hierarchical ranking system. While showing his tenderness and care for little children Jesus is teaching us in today's gospel to accept the Kingdom with a child-like openness. We must rediscover within us the capacity to trust and to receive, removing so many defense mechanisms, putting aside our wisdom and self-sufficiency. In front of God we are actually defenseless children, why pretend to be otherwise?

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cn1.net; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missiona-ries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

JUDICIAL ETHICS—Standard of conduct of judges—Rule 3.05 of the Code of Judicial Conduct specifically mandates: "A judge shall dispose of the court's business promptly and decide cases within the required periods." It behooves upon judges to closely follow the standard of conduct set forth in the Code of Judicial Conduct, to preserve the competence and independence of the judiciary and make administration of justice more efficient. The failure of even one member of the judiciary to live up to such standard compromises the entire judiciary and adversely affects the image of the judicial bench before the public. The Supreme Court is aware of the heavy case load of first level courts such as the MTCC. In a number of cases, we have allowed reasonable extensions of time needed to decide cases. But such extensions must first be requested from this Court. A judge cannot by himself choose to prolong the period for deciding cases beyond that authorized by law. Without any order of extension granted by this Court, failure to decide even a single case within the required period constitutes gross inefficiency that merits administrative sanction. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Quisumbing, Second Division, Saceda v. Gestopa, A.M. No. MTJ-00-1303, December 13, 2001]

Digest by R.B. Vera

For screening times, call 729-7777
Schedules are subject to change without prior notice
AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC
1 SPIDERMAN	1 IN THE BEDROOM	1 SPIDERMAN	1 SPIDERMAN 12:20,2:50, 5:20,7:20	1 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
2 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2	2 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2	2 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2	2 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2 12:40,3:30,6:20, 9:10,12:00MN	2 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
3 AKALA MO	3 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2 12:40,/3:30/6:20/ 9:10/12:00 MN	3 HARD BALL	3 SOON TO OPEN	3 SPIDERMAN
4 ANIME QUEST 2002	4 K-PAX	MARTIN NIEVERA BACK ONSTAGE May 24, 25, 31 & June 1	4 SOON TO OPEN	4 DEATH SMOOCHY
	5 STAR WARS/ PANIC ROOM		5 SOON TO OPEN	5 IN THE BEDROOM
	6 SPIDERMAN			
	7 DEATH TO SMOOCHY			

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SA PAG-IBIG, WALANG IMPOSIBLE
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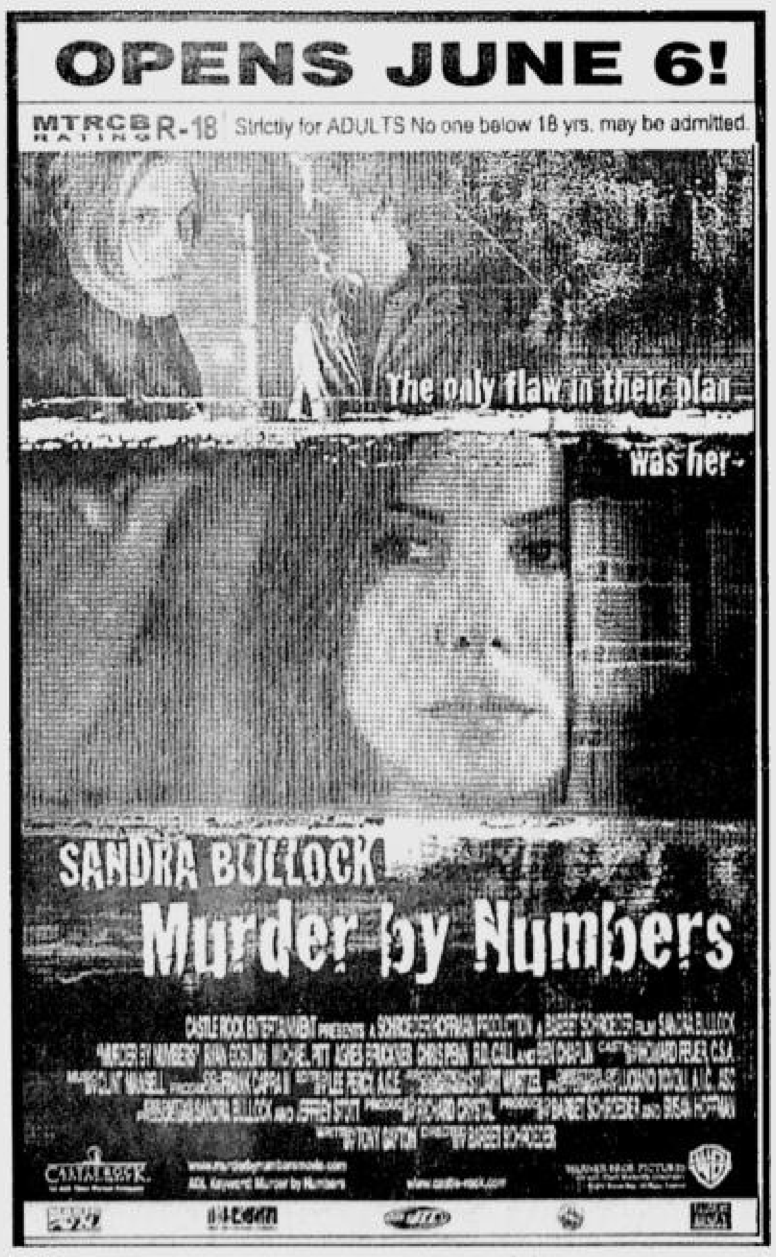
OPENS JUNE 6!
MTRCB RATING R-18 Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.
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was her.
SANDRA BULLOCK
Murder by Numbers

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

1	2	3
SPIDERMAN - GP 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10	IN THE BEDROOM-R18 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00	STAR WARS - GP 1:25, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50
STAR WARS - GP 11:20, 2:10, 5:00, 7:50, 10:40	DEATH TO SMOOCHY-P13 1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:20	STAR WARS - GP 12:10, 3:00, 5:50, 8:40, 11:30

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GP
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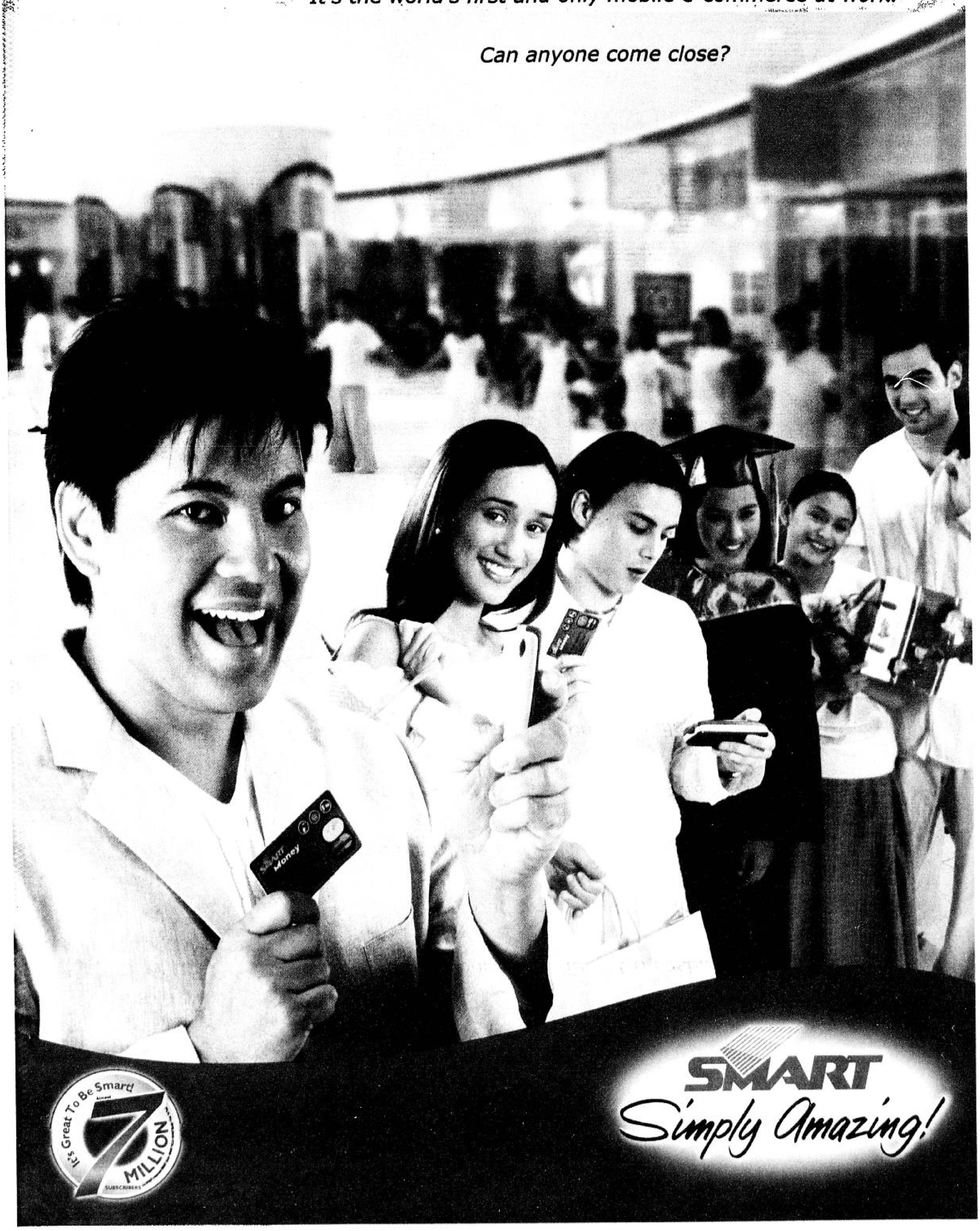
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BUSINESS

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BSP survey shows firms more upbeat

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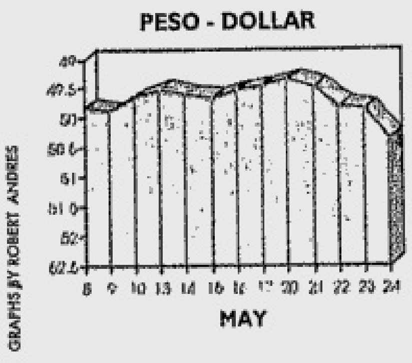


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 50.35 = $1

As of 5 p.m., May 24, 2002

¥125.02/05=$1

As of 5 p.m., May 24, 2002

GOLD: $320.70/321.20

per ounce Hong Kong,
May 24, 2002

STOCK MARKET

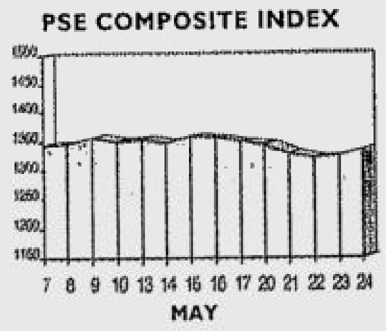
Shares up slightly

SHARES ended higher yesterday as bargain hunters took advantage of the market's recent weakness to accumulate select blue chips, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index broke its 1330-point minor resistance to end up 11.18 points, or 0.8 percent, to 1335.12, adding to its 0.3-percent gain Thursday. Prior to the previous session's rise, the index lost 2.8 percent in five straight trading days.

Aiding the market's rise was Globe Telecom, which closed up P15, or 2.3 percent, to P680 on bargain hunting.

Index stock PLDT also contributed to the market's renewed strength, rising P12.50, or 3 percent, to P432.50 following the 3-percent gain made by PLDT's American Depositary Receipts in New York Thursday. *AP*



(See stock market report on Page B2)

By Clarissa S. Batino

BUSINESSMEN are more bullish about the country's prospects in the coming quarter largely on expectations of improvements in the local and global economies, a survey by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed.

The main concern, however, was focused on insufficient demand and, consequently, an excess capacity that continued to prevent companies from considering any expansion plans for now.

A quarterly BSP poll conducted in March and April covering 236 respondents showed that the improved expectations of businesses reflected by the previous survey was sustained in the second and third quarters.

"The respondent firms cited the recovery in global demand and the generally stable political and macroeconomic environment as reasons for the upbeat sentiment in the current and incoming quarter," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said in a statement.

The central bank had surveyed 12 major industry groups with firms drawn from Manila's top 3,000 corporations. The poll's respondents represented a 39.3-percent response rate, slightly higher than the previous quarter's 39 percent.

Using a so-called diffusion index wherein positive results meant that more poll respondents had an improving outlook rather than deteriorating, the index for the second quarter reached 31 percent from 5.9 percent the previous quarter.

For the coming quarter, the index hit 47.5 percent, indicating the rosy expectations of the respondents, largely on the anticipation that demand would improve toward the latter part of the year as a result of better domestic growth.

"The outlook for the third quarter is consistent with the market's view of a stronger domestic economic activity, due in part to the improved global economic conditions and in anticipation of increased demand in the fourth quarter," Buenaventura said.

The government is expecting the gross domestic product to have grown between 3.8 and 4.3 percent in the first quarter, a level higher than the 3.4-percent growth in 2001.

Inflation in the first four months of the year had averaged at a modest 3.6 percent but the budget deficit in the first quarter had exceeded the P52.93-billion target by more than 15 percent.

Still, the poll respondents pointed to competition and insufficient demand as factors seen to limit production and business activity.

About 73 percent of the respondents mostly from the farm and industry sectors said they were operating at less than full capacity. At the same time, almost 73 percent also indicated that they have no expansion plans for the third quarter.

Compared with the first-quarter survey, however, the level of respondents operating lower than full capacity had declined from 90 percent while those without expansion plans had also dropped from 80 percent.

The BSP had started including

BSP/ B6

Bangko Sentral taps 7 banks to handle $500-M loan

By Clarissa S. Batino

A SYNDICATE of seven foreign and local banks was chosen by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday to handle a five-year, fully underwritten straight loan worth at least $500 million.

The policy-making Monetary Board of the BSP accepted the syndicated loan proposal of BNP Paribas, BPI Capital Corp., Development Bank of Singapore Ltd., ING Bank N.V., Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and Standard Chartered Bank.

The Bangko Sentral said in a statement the loan would refinance an existing term loan facility at a substantially cheaper cost and lengthen the maturity profile of the bank's foreign debt.

More than a dozen institutions and groups submitted proposals.

"The offers received reflected a pricing that indicated continuing confidence of the investor community in the Philippines," Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said in the statement.

Buenaventura said the central bank chose a loan facility over a bond issue so as not to crowd out the national government and the private sector in future bond floats.

A loan would also help the portfolio of the banking system and help reduce the bad loans of the banks, Buenaventura added. As of March, the non-performing loans of the banking system accounted for 18 percent of total loans.

The pricing structure of a loan, according to BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. was also more flexible. The central bank would have a flexibility in

BANGKO/ B6

Ford

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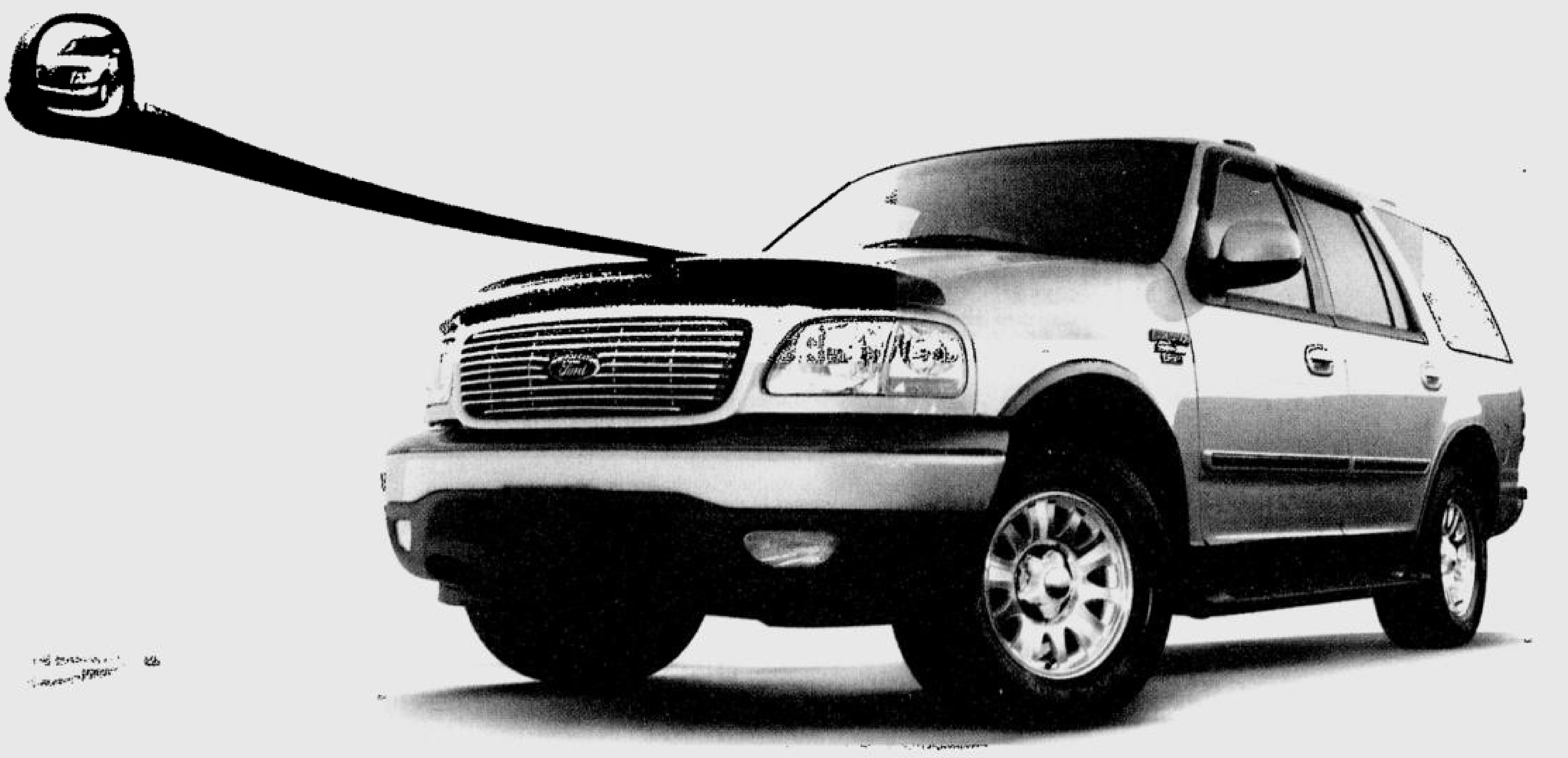

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Spy there, man!

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

ONCE again, we are pleased to present to you, well, not Spiderman, but the world renowned experts on PPA and IPP. They are none other than our beloved public officials.

They are all coming up with brilliant solutions to the problems. They don't say, of course, that they also caused the problems.

The PPA and the IPP, as everybody knows by now, are the reasons why my mother goes into a fit of uncontrollable anger the moment she sees her electric bill.

The bill indicates that she must pay for two times the electricity she actually used, precisely because of the PPA and the IPP.

My mother's unusual reaction to the PPA and the IPP, according to doctors, is not a good sign, considering her heart condition.

Thus I cannot begin to thank our public officials for trying their level best to talk about the PPA and the IPP endlessly, which only makes my mother all the more angry.

* * *

PUBLIC official No. 1 is none other than Kuya Eddie. It seems only yesterday, but it was two administrations ago, when everybody sucked up to him. Those were the days!

Although the PPA and the IPP became big problems under this cute administration of Gloriaetta, they came about during the watch of Kuya Eddie.

To shed light on the issues, senators asked Kuya Eddie to attend the Senate hearings. Kuya Eddie is not the type to say "no" to any speaking engagement.

Because of his eagerness to present solutions to the PPA and the IPP problems to the public, Kuya Eddie got lost. Instead of the Senate, he went to Malacañang.

There at the Palace, right in the employees' canteen, Kuya Eddie himself, in person, but minus the trademark cigar, held a long media conference.

For the very first time ever, after a long silence, he revealed his views on the issues. The solution of the man, as thought up apparently by his spies here and there, was to blame everybody else except himself.

* * *

PUBLIC official No. 2 is Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr., who is one of the four Wall Street-types in the Cabinet of this cute administration.

In television ads, Perez encourages everybody to save on electricity. This is his way of telling my mother to stop using electricity, if she cannot accept the PPA.

During the time of Kuya Eddie, our beloved government firm Napocor agreed to buy power from IPPs and to pay for it, whether we use it or not.

The power which Napocor bought but which we don't actually use today thus becomes the wonderful PPA in my mother's electric bill.

Let's say Perez is such a charismatic energy secretary. His television ads become a smashing success. All of us save on electricity. Let's say we cut consumption by half.

But under the PPA, we must still pay for the savings. What we save in actual consumption emerges in the PPA. That's the Perez solution!

* * *

PUBLIC official No. 3 is Asisclo Gonzaga, president of Transco, a company under Napocor, which takes care of the transmission lines.

Asisclo, which is his real name, has the solution to the PPA problems. And that is, simply, his own company Transco must do its job.

You see, Meralco says it can bring down the electricity rates by 60 centavos per kilowatt-hour, if only it can choose which generating plants to get power from.

At present, Meralco is forced to get power from plants assigned to it by Napocor. They are expensive. By world standard, they are even highway robbery.

Napocor produces power at about 9 US cents per kilowatt-hour. Yet it even has a complete array of cheap sources like hydro and geothermal plants.

In other countries, such a diversified sourcing would mean production cost of only 4 to 5 US cents per kilowatthour. In short, Napocor's is double!

The problem is Meralco cannot bring down its rates by getting power from other power plants because Napocor do not have the transmission lines.

Technically, in Napocor circles, it is called "transmission constraints." In plain language, Transco is not doing its job. Don't even mention Asisclo's name to my mother.

* * *

AT least our congressmen found a way to put their pork into good use. Yoda Venecia is asking his boys to donate P5 million each of their pork to the El Niño fund.

In other words, Yoda is asking congressmen to give the money which is not rightfully theirs because it is all our tax money, in the first place!

As you know anyway, the Department of Agriculture is scrounging around for funds for its anti-El Niño projects.

Recently, the Department of Agriculture was able to convince the Department of Budget to release P1 billion of its budget for 2002 immediately, please.

There's just one tiny little problem. That P1 billion is not enough. Agriculture needs only P1 billion more.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin suggested that local governments put part of their IRA, the internal revenue allotment, to the projects. People told her, "good luck!"

* * *

AND so Agriculture ran to Yoda for help, begging him to beg the congressmen to put their pork into anti-El Niño projects such as shallow wells and irrigation canals.

It is a chance for Yoda to powder up the image of the House of Representatives. Well, congressmen were about to tear each other's throats over pork barrel just last week.

Yoda assigned certain congressmen to convince their fellow congressmen to grant the request. Anyway, Agriculture can always use the money also in their districts.

But take a look at that—the congressmen even needed a little convincing. It's as if the pork money is their birth right! Do I take it that they can still say "no" to Yoda?

I just thought that Yoda's suggestion is a no brainer. To me, it's an approved-without-thinking. We are talking of food production here. It is our own survival.

I mean, it's not as if Agriculture is asking the congressmen for night club money. To which congressmen may even readily agree! That's where our taxes actually go!

₱250-M MARKETING BLITZ

Electrolux aims to corner big chunk of RP appliance market

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SWEDISH home appliance maker Electrolux is aiming to barge into the top three appliance brands in the country with its aggressive relaunch of the Electrolux and White-Westinghouse brands.

Electrolux East Asia president Fredrik Ramen said the company was aiming to get a bigger share of the market within the next three years by going into the mass retail business with its high-quality products and superior after-sales service. The Philippines white line market is currently dominated by Japanese appliance brands National and Sharp.

Ramen said Electrolux started its rebranding and relaunch 10 years ago following the divestment of its direct selling business of mainly vacuum cleaners and water purifiers. Its marketing blitz in the Asean has made it the No. 2 brand in vacuum cleaners and cooking appliances.

Electrolux plans to attract more buyers in its showrooms with a broader product line of kitchen and laundry appliances such as refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners and cooking appliances.

Electrolux is planning to spend P250 million for advertising and sales to build up its brands to become one of the top three appliance brands in the country over the next three years.

The company plans to raise its retail network from 150 to 250; its service centers from 34 to 46; and employees from 130 to 210 next year.

To encourage retailers to put their wares on store shelves, Electrolux has adopted a one-price policy nationwide. It also intends to subsidize the cost of delivery to areas outside Metro Manila, monitor stocks tightly, and offer cash discounts and incentives to those with monthly sales of over P1 million.

Ramen said Electrolux had no plan to put up a production facility in the country as all of its stock would come from its plants in Europe and Asia.

Union Bank posts 115% profit growth

UNION BANK of the Philippines posted a 115-percent increase in net profits in the first four months of the year to P636 million on continued rise in fee-based income.

For the full year, the bank is projecting a 30-percent growth in profit, or about the same growth level as last year's 32 percent.

UBP president Victor Valdepeñas reported during the bank's stockholders' meeting yesterday that UBP was able to reduce its dependence on credit portfolio to generate earnings, compared with seven years ago when 90 percent of its profits came from the lending business.

The hefty increase in profits during the period, according to UBP chair Justo Ortiz, shows that the bank is now reaping the fruits of its innovations.

"We have leadership in the business segments of the future corporate cash management, B-to-B solution, Internet banking. These are already profitable segments today. Our corporate cash management business now contributes 21 percent to the bank's net income while our web-accessed retail business, another 20 percent," Ortiz said. *Doris C. Dumlao*

DISCLOSURES

OMICO Corp. said its warrants would expire on June 30 this year. On July 1, the warrants will be delisted and will no longer be traded.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. said that reports that Smart Communications Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary, would go public next year was speculative. The two companies have yet to deliberate on the issue.

* * *

EDSA Properties Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 13, 10 a.m., at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. Only stockholders of record as of May 14 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

BENGUET Corp. denied having any information that could explain the 50-percent increase in its share price from P0.30 to P0.45 per share.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Philippine Bank of Communications** approved the increase in the number of its directors from 11 to 12. ***Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, May 24, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	20.75	20.75	20.5	20.75	646,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	55.5	56	55.5	56	1,026,000
China Banking Corp.	630	630	630	630	40
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	38	39	38	39	173,900
First E-Bank Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	119,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	40	40.5	40	40	44,100
Philippine National Bank	40.5	40.5	40	40	41,500
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	1,000
Security Bank Corp.	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	60,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	23	23.25	23	23.25	85,900
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	20,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1455	1470	1455	1470	1,640
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	10,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1095	1105	1095	1105	7,340
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	30	30	29.5	29.5	48,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.6	0.61	0.6	0.6	1,230,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	665	680	665	680	38,440
Ipeople Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.038	0.038	0.038	0.038	700,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	1,000
Piltel	0.36	0.4	0.36	0.39	4,560,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	422.5	432.5	422.5	432.5	88,350
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.017	25,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	24	25	24	25	24,500
Manila Electric Co. B	37	38.5	37	38	924,800
Petron Corp.	1.84	1.9	1.84	1.88	12,982,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	250,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	240,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.26	1.3	1.2	1.2	160,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.65	330,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	2.24	2.24	2.2	2.2	65,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	80,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.71	0.71	0.7	0.7	390,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.16	2.3	2.16	2.28	857,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	1,515,300
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	34	34	33.5	34	266,700
RFM Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	52,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48	48.5	48	48	33,000
San Miguel Corp. B	56	56	55.5	56	715,200
Universal Robina Corp.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	40,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	80,000
Ayala Corp.	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.7	4,693,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.34	2.34	2.32	2.32	2,913,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	1,110,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.56	500,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	5,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	100,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.9	40,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	90,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.15	110,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.54	3,230,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	200,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	292,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	24	24.25	24	24.25	131,100
Global Equities Inc.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.135	770,000
Ionics Inc.	7	7	7	7	6,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	30,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.77	0.78	0.77	0.77	12,040,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.52	0.53	160,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.25	310,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.61	0.61	20,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	10,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.79	0.79	250,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	70,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.0975	0.0975	1,400,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.25	110,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	5,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	4.05	4.05	4	4.05	7,000
Pryce Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	90,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	360,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	30	30.5	30	30.5	119,400
Equitable PCI Bank-War	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	40,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	810	830	810	830	1,550
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,700
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	13,000,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	420	420	420	420	150
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.2	13,174,000
Cityland Development Corp.	3	3	3	3	50,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	1,720,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	460,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	3.1	3.15	3.05	3.05	1,661,000
Highlands Prime Leisure	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	60,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.9	6	5.9	6	7,301,000
UrbanCorp. Realty Dev. Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	10,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	1,000,000
Benguet Corp. B	2.06	2.06	1.5	1.5	3,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines Inc.	0.039	0.04	0.038	0.04	18,400,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.23	11,810,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.245	850,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	4,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.33	0.33	0.31	0.31	540,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	1,180,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0032	0.0032	0.003	0.0032	64,000,000
South China Resources Inc	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	30,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	2,238,420	94,583,185.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	98,491,190	259,063,965.00
PRO	24,436,000	144,878,750.00
Mining	37,783,000	4,271,920.00
OIL	64,030,000	211,500.00
GRAND TOTALS:	226,978,610	503,009,320.00
AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	544.41	UP 1.56
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,802.83	UP 16.09
PRO	609.90	UP 6.67
Mining	1,468.79	UP 6.71
OIL	1.23	DOWN 0.01
All Shares Index	759.60	UP 7.73
Composite	1,335.12	UP 11.18

NO. OF ADVANCES: 33; NO. OF DECLINES: 23; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 40; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 96; NO. OF TRADES: 2,133

CURRENCIES

May 24, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.084599	1.000000	49.8280
Japan	Yen	0.008679	0.008002	0.3987
United Kingdom	Pound	1.577983	1.454900	72.4948
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.139056	0.128210	6.3884
Switzerland	Franc	0.687325	0.633714	31.5767
Canada	Dollar	0.707039	0.651890	32.4824
Singapore	Dollar	0.602387	0.555401	27.6745
Australia	Dollar	0.604907	0.557724	27.7903
Bahrain	Dinar	2.877073	2.652661	132.1768
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.289219	0.266660	13.2871
Brunei	Dollar	0.600719	0.553863	27.5979
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000121	0.000112	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.025299	0.023326	1.1623
UAE	Dirham	0.295306	0.272272	13.5668
Korea	Won	0.000881	0.000812	0.0405
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.922000	45.9414
Brazil	Real	0.428526	0.395101	19.6871
Denmark	Kroner	0.134539	0.124045	6.1809
India	Rupee	0.022149	0.020421	1.0175
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.285421	0.263158	13.1126
Mexico	New Peso	0.113749	0.104877	5.2258
New Zealand	Dollar	0.514198	0.474091	23.6230
Norway	Kroner	0.134085	0.123626	6.1600
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018106	0.016694	0.8318
South Africa	Rand	0.107195	0.098834	4.9247
Sweden	Kroner	0.109559	0.101013	5.0333
Syria	Pound	0.024819	0.022883	1.1402
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.031685	0.029214	1.4557
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001087	0.001002	0.0499

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Gov't to renegotiate ADB loan terms

By Clarissa S. Batino

INSTEAD of canceling a $175-million grains sector loan, the government has decided to renegotiate with the Asian Development Bank the "restrictive" conditions of the facility, Finance Undersecretary Juanita Amatong said.

"We have talked to them (ADB officials) and they said the bank was willing to renegotiate the conditions of the loan so that the (Philippine) government could avail itself of the funding in full," Amatong said.

In particular, the government is seeking the removal of a provision that requires the passage of a bill on National Food Authority's privatization before the third and final tranche of the loan will be released.

Amatong said that any condition the required legislation or enactment of a law would definitely be hard to meet. "This was also the reason why the government had canceled a $400-million banking sector reform loan from the World Bank.

The finance official said the government would also ask the ADB to release the second tranche worth $30 million of the grains sector loan since the bank's conditions were already met substantially.

Of the amount, $100 million represents the program loan component which can be used for budgetary support while $75 million will be used to finance specific projects.

The ADB has so far released the first tranche of the program loan worth only $30 million in April 2000 or shortly after the loan was approved.

The need for competitive computer literate students have increased during the past years. This is the reason why Holy Spirit Academy of Bulacan signed a pact with Genetic Computer Institute, Manila last November 21, 2001. This agreement paves the way for comprehensive Information Technology training for the students of Holy Spirit Academy. The said training will enable them to become competitive in the field of computer education here and abroad.

GENETIC Computer
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(Seated from Left) Mrs. Norma Ching, School Administrator, Genetic Computer Institute Banawe Center and Sister Frances Grace Solis, SSpS, School Principal, Holy Spirit Academy of Malolos, Bulacan (Standing from Left) Mr. Emmanuel Ching, President, Genetic Computer Institute, Banawe Center and Mr. John Tan, Marketing Executive.

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ADVT.

In line with the advancement of computer technologies here and abroad, St. Peter The Apostle School in Paco, Manila tied up with Genetic Computer Institute, a Singapore based computer institution last April 04, 2002. The purpose of the tie-up is to upgrade the students' knowledge in Information Technology. This will give students from St. Peter the technical know-how in computer technology and the competitiveness to compete with highly skilled students in the international scene.

GENETIC Computer
BANAWE CENTER

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(seated from left) Sister Theresa Wang, School Principal, St. Peter The Apostle School of Paco, Manila and Mrs. Norma Ching, School Administrator, Genetic Computer Institute Banawe Center (standing from Left) Mr. Arlan Tiu, I.T. Head and Mr. Daniel Borela, Marketing Executive.

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ADVT.

The hot new Motorola V70 handset makes its global Philippine debut:

Changing the look of personal communications

The company that created mobile communications changes the rule again: Don't 'Flip' to Talk... Swing, Baby, Swing!

MOTOROLA recently held the Philippine premiere of its hotly anticipated V70 mobile handset, marking the dawn of a new day of style, personality and design in global personal communications. The oriental-fan-type design (swing open to talk) is the latest innovation by the company responsible for spearheading the evolution of mobile communications.

"With the Micro TAC we pioneered the 'flip' to talk, with the Star TAC we created a revolution in sexy simplicity, and now we've created a whole new gesture and personal statement in communications with the Motorola V70," said Ellen T. Suarez, Marketing Manager for Consumer Solutions Group—South Asia.

"The V70 is the new 'must-have' accessory for fashion-forward consumers for whom style and individuality is a key aspect of their communications lifestyle."

The V70 makes its debut in Asia, the region identified by leading telecommunications research firm the Yankee Group as the global hotspot for mobile communications growth.

The Yankee Group is forecasting that the number of mobile subscribers will grow 86 percent from its current level to reach about 629 million in 2005, while handset shipments to the region will rise from 162.3 million in 2001 to 296.2 million in 2005.

The iconic new design of the V70 was spearheaded by Motorola's director of Consumer Experience Design, Tim Parsey, with contributions from the company's design centers in Beijing, tokyo, Seoul, Singapore, Milan and United States. Parsey's design philosophy has been honed over the course of an eclectic and accomplished career that includes stints designing bobsleds and Apple computers.

The Motorola V70 is 56cc in size, weighs 83g with the standard 44mAh Lithium Ion battery and measures 94x38x18.3mm. It has manufacturer's suggested retail price of P25,000. Cool features and functions that complement the handset's unique design include:

- 360-degree rotational functionality
- Blue backlit display
- Interchangeable bezels
- User-friendly key placement
- 64 alert tones: 32 customizable, 32 standard
- Custumizable main menu, similar to a "home page"
- Up to 130 minutes of talk time
- Up to 140 hours of standby time

Consumers can access information and purchasing details at www.ap.motorola.com

Motorola V70

A MOTORMARVEL has arrived with the Motorola V70. Incorporating a never-before-seen rotating cover and circular display, the Motorola V70 exudes style and sophistication. The Motorola V70 blends design and fashion with function for the style-minded consumer who wants the most progressive and avant-garde mobile device. Additionally, the small and lightweight model V70 offers a full range of communication and entertainment features. Rotating heads will become the norm for those who dare to embrace it.

Your Phone, Your Way

Create a unique look for your Motorola V70 by changing the display bezels, organizing the menu to suit your needs and customizing 32 of your own ring tones.

Motortyle

Users will fall in love with the blue electro-luminescent (EL) MotoGlo emanating through the translucent keypad. A spotlight on style and fashion is obvious everywhere.

With One Hand Behind Your Back

The Motorola V70's one-of-a-kind exterior allows the user to open rotating cover with one hand or keep it closed to answer or place a call with the hands-free accessory. Or, with one touch of the model V70's voice-activation key, get your friends on the line with a single word.

Talk or Text

When you are ready to hit the town, bring your friends together with a quick conference call on the Motorola V70. Or, save vocal cords and let your fingers do the talking by sending out an SMS text message to one or 10 of your closest friends.

Not Now, Please

With the Motorola V70, you never have to take any unexpected calls. Check the exterior caller ID before answering your phone, allowing you to pick-and-choose who interrupts your day.

Always On

The Motorola V70 is powered with the latest technology, offering "always on, always connected" Internet access, eliminating the need for a dial-up and providing high-speed data service for sending and receiving information. Some people call this GPRS, we call this fabulous.

About Motorola

Motorola, Inc. (NYSE:MOT) is a global leader in providing integrated communications solutions and embedded electronic solutions. Sales in 2000 were US$37.6 billion.

Network and subscription dependent feature. Not available in all areas.

All talk and standby times are approximate and depend on network configuration, signal strength, and features selected. Standby times are quoted as a range from DRX=2 to DRX=9. Talktime are quoted as a range from DTX off to DTX on.

Specifications are subject to change without prior notice.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

NUESTRA-DAMUS- PAWNSHOP MAKATI CITY Auction Sale on **June 6, 2002** all unredeemed pledges during the month of January 1-31, 2002. Nuestra Br. II Pio-9:30am; Nuestra Br. I-10:30am; Nuestra Br. VI-11:30am; Damus Pasong Tamo-12:30pm; Nuestra Main-JP-1:30pm; Nuestra Br IX Zapote-3:00pm - SONS OF J. LANUZA-Auctioneer

Nuestra-Damus Pawnshop Makati City Auction Sale on **June 6, 2002** all unredeemed pledges during the month of January 1-31. 2002. Nuestra Br. II Pio-9:30am; Nuestra Br. I-10:30am; Damus Pasong Tamo-12:30pm; Nuestra Main JP-1:30pm; Nuestra Br. IX Zapote 3:00pm.
Sons of J. Lanuza Auctioneer

NUESTRA-DIAJADE PAWNSHOP LAS PINAS METRO MANILA Will have its auction sale on **June 7, 2002**. All unredeemed pledges during the month of January 1-31, 2002. Nuestra Sucat - 8:30am; Diajade Main-9:30am; Diajade Br. II 10:30am; Nuestra Br. III-11:30am; Diajade Br. I-1:00pm; Nuestra Alamanza 2:00pm.
Sons of J. Lanuza
Auctioneer

Republic of the Philippines
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
Industry & Investments Building
385 Gil J. Puyat Avenue
Makati City
Fax No. 8954024
Tel. Nos. 8976682
8901332

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of PROCHEM TECHNOLOGY ASIA-PACIFIC, INC. with office address at 6/F Pacific Star Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as amended, as New Export Producer of Herbicide at a capacity of 16,000,000 liters per year and with plant site at Building Y-1, JY & Sons Compound, Veterans Center, Taguig, Metro Manila has been officially accepted on May 15, 2002 and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection, in writing and under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 15th day of May 2002.

(Sgd.) **FRANCISCO C. CHAVEZ**
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI -- May 25, 2002)

A construction company is in need of

TBM Operators
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Please submit resumé to Eric Mariano c/o Cibel's Fastfood, McArthur Highway, Angeles City infront of Angeles University Foundation.

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DAR-ADB
ARCP

Department of Agrarian Reform
Asian Development Bank
Agrarian Reform Communities Project
FAPsO Bldg., DAR Central Office,
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

DAR

Invitation to Pre-Qualify and to Bid

The AGRARIAN REFORM COMMUNITIES PROJECT (ARCP), a special project of the DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM (DAR) funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), invites interested parties or individual consultants to pre-qualify and bid for the conduct of a **SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT STUDY** for the NED Agrarian Reform Community (ARC) in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) and other pre-qualification requirements can be obtained from the Project Evaluation Unit (PEU) of ARCP - Central Project Management Office at G/F DAR - Foreign Assisted Projects Office (FAPsO), DAR Compound, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

The ARCP reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein or to accept such bid(s) as may be most advantageous (and is consistent with the bank's provision on hiring of consultants) to it. Moreover, ARCP assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in preparation of the bids.

For further details, please call Mr. Jay Bertram T. Lacsamana or Ms. Susan Cruz at **455-9200** or **455-9227**.

The Chairman
National Prequalifications and
Awards Committee (NPEAC)
DAR-Foreign Assisted Projects Office

(PDI - May 18 & 25 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
SEC Building EDSA Greenhills
Mandaluyong City
Non-Traditional Securities and Instruments Department

IN THE MATTER OF

JARDINE LLOYD THOMPSON INSURANCE BROKERS, INC.
-Applicant-

Registration and Licensing
As General Agent in Pre-Need Plans

x--------------------------------x

ORDER

Notice is hereby given that on April 2, 2002 a sworn application for registration as General Agent in Pre-Need Plans was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission for and on behalf of the Philam Plans, Inc.

Based on the document filed, the following persons appear to be its officers/directors:

Name	POSITION
Gil E. Cortes	President
Aloysius B. Colayco	Chairman
Kevin L. Norman	CEO and Gen. Manager
Nicholas A. Ball	SVP-Finance
Gary R. Swafield	VP-Construction Division
Bi Yong S. Chungunco	Corporate Secretary
Marise V. Marquez	Asst. Corporate Secretary

Said application for registration and other documents attached thereto are open to inspection by interested parties during business hours, and copies thereof, photostatic or otherwise, shall be furnished to anyone upon request as such reasonable fees as the Commission may prescribe.

Any person may file an opposition thereto within ten (10) days from publication of the Notice.

SO ORDERED.
EDSA Mandaluyong City, Philippines
May 9, 2002

(Sgd.) EMILIO B. AQUINO
Director

(PDI -- May 25, 2002)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF MANILA
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 21

IN THE MATTER OF THE CHANGE OF
NAME OF ROSELL PEREZ RAMOS
SP. PROC. NO. 02-103025

ROSELL PEREZ RAMOS,
Petitioner
x--------------------------------x

ORDER

Before this Court is a verified petition for change of name filed by petitioner Rosell Perez Ramos.

Petitioners is praying that after due notice, publication and hearing an order be issued changing petitioner's name from **"ROSELLE TY RAMOS"** to **"ROSELL PEREZ RAMOS."**

Finding the Petition to be sufficient in form and substance, the same is hereby set for hearing on **June 11, 2002** at 8:30 in the morning at which date and time, interested parties may appear and show cause why the Petition should not be granted.

Notify the petitioner, the City Civil Registrar of Manila and the Office of the Solicitor General who is directed to appear for and on behalf of the government.

Let this Order be published at petitioner's expense once a week for three consecutive weeks before the appointed date of hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in Metro Manila the same to be determined by raffle pursuant to P.D. No. 1079.

SO ORDERED.

Manila, Philippines, March 14, 2002.

(Sgd.) **AMOR A. REYES**
Judge

(PDI - May 25, June 1 & 8, 2002)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUPPLIERS!

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Interested suppliers may send / fax / e-mail their company profile,
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i-RISE CONSUMERS MART INC.

i-RISE CONSUMERS MART, INC.
Celilu Compound, Km. 17 Ortigas Ext. (after Ever Gotesco Ortigas, fronting BF Metals), Cainta, Rizal.
Telephone Nos. 655-2822/655-2961/655-3001/655-2805 / Telefax: 655-3108
E-mail: siag@risegroup.net / i-rise@risegroup.net

Provincial Suppliers may contact the nearest regional office.

Regional Offices	Contact Person	Address	Telephone Nos.
1 Western Visayas	Cosette Garin	2nd Flr. Amigo Terrace Plaza, Iznart St. Iloilo City	(033) 3365906 / 3368321
2 Central Visayas	Ramiro "Spines" Espina	Unit 6 Galleria Fuente, Mango Ave. Cebu City	(032) 2531532 / 2532547
3 Eastern Visayas	Renato Roldan	Rm. 305, 3/F Dynasty Square Bldg. Zamora St., Tacloban City, Leyte	(053) 3253730
4 Mindanao	Julio Cruz	2nd Flr. La Fontana Di Remedios Arcade Bolton St., Davao City	(082) 3052813

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late **FERDINAND P. AGONCILLO** was extrajudicially settled among his heirs per Doc #200 Page #41 Book #71 Series of 2002 under Notary Public Atty. Juanito Dimaano of Marikina City
(PDI-May18,25&June1,2002)

NOTICE is given that the Estate of Spouses **FELICISIMO ABARQUEZ** and **AMPARO ABARQUEZ** was extrajudicially settled by their heirs by virtue of Doc. No. 7, Page No. 2, Book No. I, Series of 2002 before Notary Public Atty. Virgilio C. Leynes.
(PDI-May 18, 25 & June 1, 2002)

Notice is given that the estate of the late ALBERTO S. VELOSO was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc #457 Page #74 Book #1 Series 2002 before Notary Public Atty. Enrico Voltaire Almeda of City of Manila.
(PDI -May 11, 18 & 25, 2002)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the heirs of the late **SIMEONA GAMEZ VDA DE OLAZO** have adjudicated among themselves her estate before notary public Atty. Marianito F. Pasaylo per Doc No. 217, Page No. 43, Book No. 1, series of 2002.
(PDI May 25, Jun 1 & 8, 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the inestate estate of the late Reynaldo C. Enriquez was settled extrajudicially by his heirs on May 23, 2002 and appears as Doc No. 357, Page No. 73, Book No. 32 Series of 2002 of Notary Public for the City of Quezon.
(PDI- May 25, June 1, & 8 2002)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

Oh, St. Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God. I place in you all my interest and desires. Oh, St. Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession, and obtain for me from your divine son all spiritual blessings, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So that, having engaged here below your heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of fathers. Oh, St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you, and Jesus asleep in your arms; I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls - Pray for me.

This prayer was found in the fiftieth year of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In 1505 it was sent from the Pope to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle. Whoever shall read this prayer or hear it or keep it about themselves, shall never die a sudden death, or be drowned, nor shall poison take effect on them; neither shall they fall into the hands of the enemy, or shall be burned in any fire or shall be overpowered in battle.

ANNOUNCEMENT

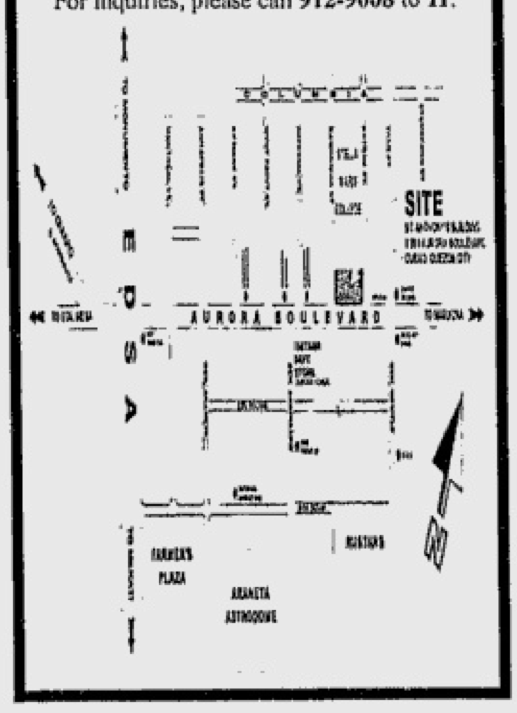
The Inquirer Classified Ads Division will conduct its mid-year review evaluation tomorrow, May 26. The Classified Ads branches will be closed except for the following branches:

MEGAMALL
10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

MAIN OFFICE
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS

Aurora branch is now open to serve your Classified Ads requirements.
For inquiries, please call **912-9008** to **11**.



NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region VII, Banilad, Cebu City

INVITATION FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Integrated Cargo Handling Services (ICHS) of NFA, Cebu Provincial Office. The ICHS involves the unloading of imported rice from foreign vessels to NFA designated warehouses in Metro Cebu, to include, but not limited to, stevedoring, men on lighter, arrastre, use of tugboat, crane, strip cleaning, trimming, bagging, rebagging, Custom's overtime, checkering charges, special/standby charges, hauling, weighing, handling, etc.

Schedule of Bidding Activities:

Issuance of Eligibility Requirements & Pre-qualification Statement	May 27 - June 5, 2002
Deadline for Submission of Accomplished Eligibility Requirements & Prequalification Statement	June 14, 2002
Notice of Eligibility to Bid & Issuance of Bid Documents	June 28, 2002
Pre-Bidding Conference	June 10, 2002 @ 10:00 AM
Submission & Opening of Bid Envelopes	July 24, 2002 @ 10:00 AM

Eligibility Requirements and Pre-Qualification Statement may be secured from and submitted to the NFA-RPBAC Secretariat, Second Floor, NFA, Cebu Regional Office, Banilad, Cebu City after payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00. Only those eligible shall be issued the bidding documents after paying a non-refundable documentary fee of One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500.00). For further inquiries, you may contact the Secretariat at tel. nos. 232-1939; 232-8620; Fax No. 233-6095.

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informality or defect found therein, and accept only such offers which, in its judgment, are deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) JAVIER P. LOZADA, JR.
Regional Director

(PDI -- May 25 & June 3, 2002)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON, KULTURA AT ISPORTS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS
DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines

Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim
Office of the Undersecretary

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education through the Health and Nutrition Center is inviting all manufacturers/suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for 2,545,400 packs of Powdered Full Cream Milk and 416,667 packs of Liquid Full Cream Milk for School Milk Project 2002. The approved budget for the project is P14,000,000.00 for the Powdered Milk and P5,000,000.00 for the Liquid Milk.

All interested manufacturers/suppliers must submit a Letter of Intent before obtaining bid documents starting **May 29, 2002** at the BAC Secretariat Office, Rm. 112-A, Mabini Bldg., DepEd Complex, Pasig City or visit the DepEd Website at *http://www.deped.gov.ph*.

A pre-bid conference will be held on **June 6, 2002**, 10:00 a.m. at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Bldg. 1, DepEd Complex, Pasig City. The Submission and Opening of Bids will be on **June 20, 2002** at the same time and place mentioned above.

DepEd-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO S. PANGAN**
Undersecretary
Chairman, DepEd-BAC

(PDI - May 25 & June 1, 2002)

We are an established publisher of several trade magazines and we are in need of the following:

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Firm to build ₱100-M passenger terminal in South Harbor

By Abigail L. Ho

SOUTH HARBOR port operator Asian Terminals Inc. is building a P100-million domestic passenger terminal, which the Philippine Ports Authority said can help drive down freight costs through competition.

In an interview, PPA executive assistant to the general manager Vincent Tan said the new terminal would give the North Harbor operators some competition, allowing market forces to dictate the freight rates.

"It could lead to lower costs for passengers," he said.

The project is part of ATI's P670-million South Harbor modernization program. It involves the construction of a passenger terminal, to be named the Doña Eva Macapagal Super Terminal after President Macapagal-Arroyo's late mother, on Pier 15 at the Port of Manila.

Aside from a new terminal, the P100-million project cost also included support facilities and equipment.

"It has been designed to service passengers of domestic shipping lines and is envisioned to have amenities comparable with those in the modern airports," ATI said in a statement.

The pier would be able to accommodate larger ships, which would lead to new and better opportunities for more efficient shipping operations and lower freight costs, it added.

Lopez company allays fears on Napocor's PPA suspension

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOPEZ-OWNED First Philippine Holdings Corp. yesterday said the suspended collection of the purchased power adjustment (PPA) by National Power Corp. would not hamper the operations of its Sta. Rita and San Lorenzo power plants in Batangas City.

The power-generating companies that operate the 1,000-megawatt Sta. Rita and the 500-mw San Lorenzo power plants are selling electricity directly to affiliate Manila Electric Co. rather than to Napocor, FPH said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday.

"As the mandated suspension of PPA collections of Meralco only affects Napocor's portion of the PPA, the Sta. Rita and San Lorenzo power plants will not be affected," FPH said.

FPH effectively owns 53 percent of the two power plants, which are among the three facilities with existing supply contracts with the Malampaya gas-to-power consortium.

Napocor, on the other hand, is the buyer under an energy conversion agreement of the Lopezes' 225-mw Bauang power plant in La Union, which is owned through FPH's power generating subsidiary First Generation Holdings Corp. (First Gen).

"With respect to the Bauang power plant, we expect Napocor to respect the provisions of the energy conversion agreement," the disclosure said.

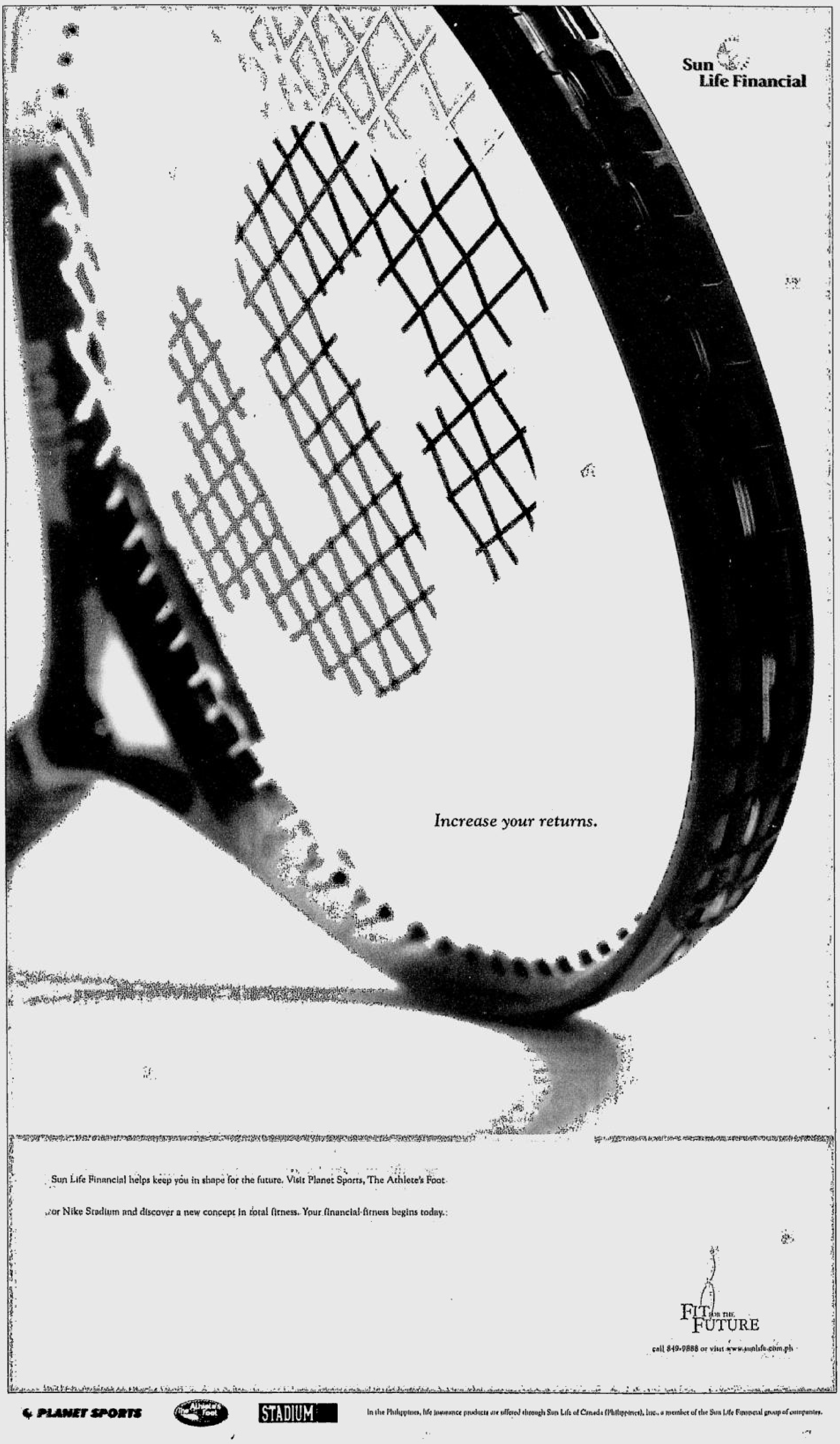
"In view of all the foregoing, we do not foresee that President Macapagal-Arroyo's directive to suspend PPA collections from Meralco would have any adverse impact on the power operations of the company," FPH said.

The PSE has solicited an explanation from all listed companies with power generation interests following concerns aired by the investing public on the impact of the PPA suspension on their operations.

For its part, FPH plans to float $150 million in foreign bonds by July this year to refinance debt and infuse capital to the North Luzon expressway project. It has tapped US investment bank JP Morgan to handle the new issuance, which will either be convertible to shares of FPH or exchangeable into shares of unlisted subsidiary First Gen.

Part of the proceeds would be used to refinance $87 million in redemption obligations due this August while $42 million would be devoted to the fresh capital requirements of the Manila North Tollways Corp.

For the full year, FPH expects to generate a net income of P2.3 billion, up from P2.1 billion worth of recurring earnings posted in 2001 on strong revenues from its power generating interests.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In the Philippines, life insurance products are offered through Sun Life of Canada (Philippines), Inc., a member of the Sun Life Financial group of companies.

Groups oppose pre-need firms' transfer to IC

THE PROPOSED transfer of the supervision of the country's pre-need companies from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to the Insurance Commission (IC) is facing opposition from industry players and other sectors.

The position to keep the regulation of pre-need firms under the SEC is supported by the Philippine Federation of Pre-need Plan Companies, now headed by Juan Miguel Vasquez as president.

"Simply put, why tamper with something that is running perfectly well," said Enrique A. Sobrepeña Jr., the former federation president, on the proposal floated by certain sectors.

"The SEC has shown it has the expertise and capability to regulate and supervise the industry," he added.

Sobrepeña pointed out that the industry has "grown immensely" under the supervision of the SEC, benefiting more than five million plan holders with P20 billion in trust funds at present.

Sobrepeña, who is also president of pre-need industry leader College Assurance Plan (CAP), stressed that any transfer of supervision would impact negatively on plan holders and have the potential to affect their returns.

He explained that transferring supervision from the SEC to the IC would also affect the earning capacity of funds. "In pre-need plans, profits that are earned from investments go to a trust fund, which benefits plan holders. In insurance, profits go to the corporation. Thus, any transfer would erode the earning capacity of funds, adversely affecting millions of plan holders," he said.

Pre-need trust funds, Sobrepeña added, were a hedge by middle and lower income families against inflation. "This gives them the chance to stretch their resources and provide for their future needs. Why take away from them the maximum benefits they can obtain under the present set-up."

Banking industry leaders, along with consumer advocacy groups, have already expressed opposition to the proposal to transfer supervision of pre-need firms to the IC.

"There is no logic in experimenting with a system that has worked so well for the past years and that has benefited Filipinos by providing for their future needs such as education and retrenchment among others," Sobrepeña said.

BSP survey . . .

From page B1

a new series called "confidence indicators" as prescribed by the assistance program under the Asian Development Bank.

The central bank said that the confidence indicators of the four major economic groupings—agriculture and industry, construction, trade, and other sectors—showed that the business conditions for the current quarter and expectations for the next three months were mostly favorable.

The central bank said that unlike in recent surveys, the recent poll no longer highlighted some of the major concerns of respondents including high interest rates, onerous access to credit and unclear economic laws.

Interest rates have fallen to historic laws while access to credit is being addressed by banks and some agencies of the government. Economic laws are also being improved.

When the survey was conducted, treasury bill rates had fallen to historic lows while the BSP overnight rates have also dropped to their lowest in 10 years.

Bangko . . .

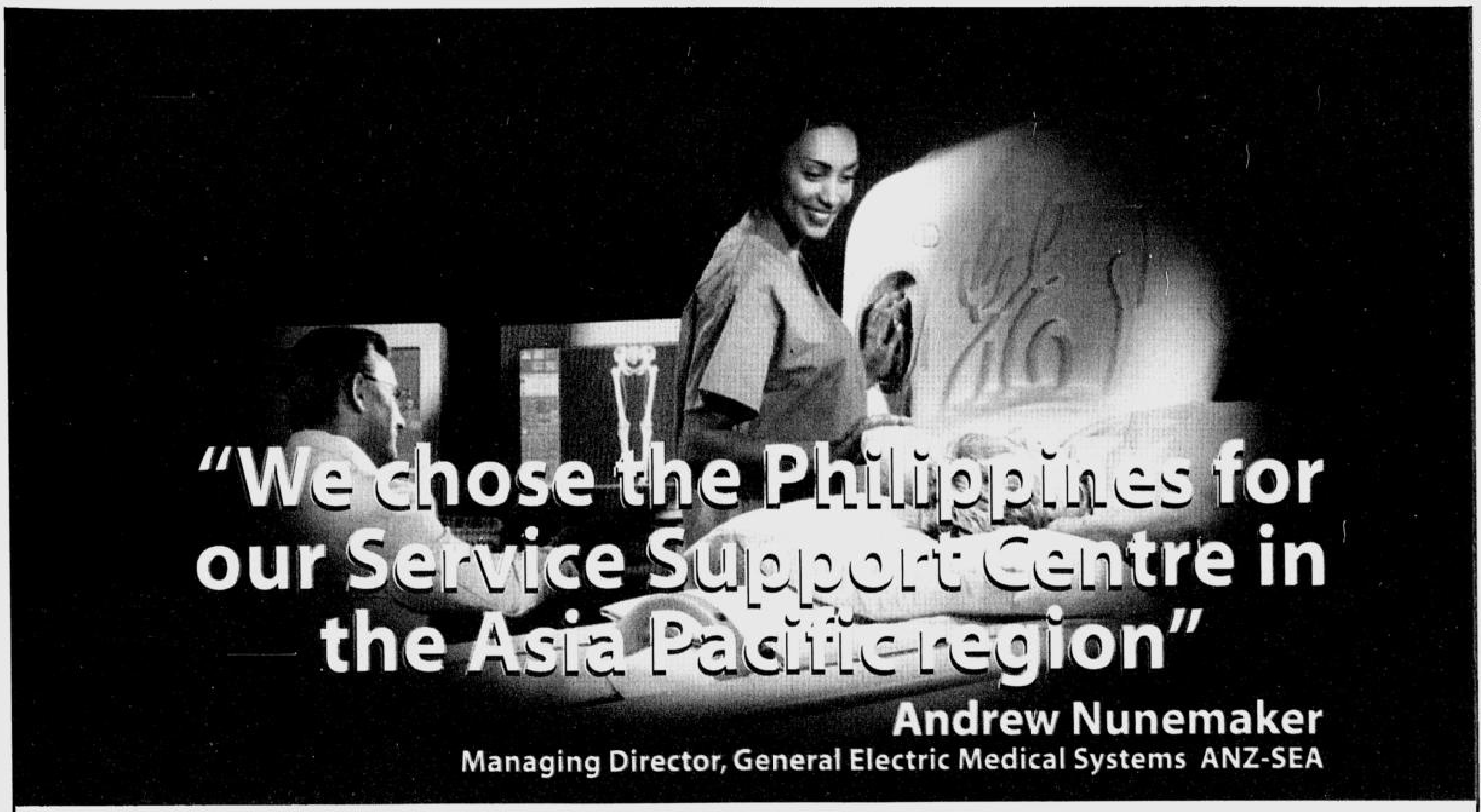
From page B1

the drawdown date as well as take advantage of a credit rating upgrade or improved market conditions.

"In the end, it is the pricing that really mattered. The offers we received were all priced well," Buenaventura said.

The central bank, he added, could borrow as much as $740 million to prepay the same amount of relatively more expensive loans obtained in April 2001 that would mature in 2004.

He said the central bank sought a prepayment provision for the loan because it was incurred at a higher rate and they had foreseen that this borrowing would be retired ahead of schedule.



"We chose the Philippines for our Service Support Centre in the Asia Pacific region"

Andrew Nunemaker
Managing Director, General Electric Medical Systems ANZ-SEA

General Electric selected the Philippines after extensive evaluation of other locations including Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia and India.

GE Medical Systems produces and services the latest in medical and diagnostic imaging equipment to hospitals and clinics the world over. Equipment that saves lives, enables correct diagnosis and assists in the treatment process.

The service team's role is critical – they take responsibility for the smooth running of this equipment, ensuring safety and efficiency for patients and medical practitioners alike.

To assist the service division, and in turn increase the efficiency and levels of support offered to customers, a Service Support Centre has been established in the Philippines. The centre provides back office processes to support the service division of GE Medical Systems, not only in the Philippines but also extending support to operations in Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.

Andrew Nunemaker
Managing Director, GE Medical Systems ANZ-SEA

The Service Support Centre supports over 230 staff throughout these countries, with tasks including checking engineer dispatches, involving customers, and providing up to date account and equipment information.

The Philippines was selected following extensive evaluation of other locations including Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia and India.

"The selection of the Philippines was based on a strong combination of factors that were unique within the region. What particularly suited us was the availability of a workforce with highly developed English language skills, along with an attractive investment climate with positive scope for expansion," explains Andrew Nunemaker, Managing Director, General Electric Medical Systems ANZ-SEA.

"The Service Support Centre has already made such a positive impact upon GE Medical Systems that we'll be expanding and employing further staff in the next few months," he adds.

GE Medical Systems Asia

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INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION AND TO BID

ITB No. 05-18-2002

In lieu of the 62 units Firearm requirement under ITB No. 04-15-2002, the Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is inviting all interested Authorized Dealers or Distributors of FIREARMS to prequalify in our forthcoming public bidding for the Supply and Delivery of the item described hereunder:

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	
	GLOCK 17	
124 UNITS	Caliber	: 9x19
	Barrel length	: 4.49 inches
	Overall length (slide)	: 7.32 inches
	Height including magazine	: 5.43 inches
	Barrel rifling	: Hexagonal profile with right hand twist
	Magazine capacity	: 17 shots
	Action	: Safe Action Trigger System
	Finish	: Tenifer
	Frame	: Black Polymer
	Sight	: Fixed sight (illuminated dot)
	No. of magazines	: 3 pieces

Suppliers should primarily comply with PAGCOR's Accreditation requirements in order to participate in the pre-qualification proceedings. The Application Form for Accreditation is available at the **SUPPLIERS ACCREDITATION & EVALUATION DIVISION (SAED), PROCUREMENT & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT (PPD), 2nd Floor, PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila.**

For Pre-qualification, send a letter of intent addressed to **MR. GERWYN P. SEE**, Suppliers Accreditation & Evaluation Officer. All Accreditation and Pre-qualification documents should be submitted before 5:00 p.m. of Monday, **June 3, 2002**. Failure to comply with the requirements will render outright disqualification. Inquiries may be coursed through the **SUPPLIERS ACCREDITATION & EVALUATION DIVISION, Tel. No. 526-0573, Fax No. 523-2045.**

All pre-qualified prospective bidders shall be invited to attend a **PRE-BID CONFERENCE**, the schedule of which shall be relayed through telephone and/or formal letters.

ACCEPTANCE and **OPENING OF BIDS** shall be announced during the Pre-bid Conference.

PAGCOR reserves the right to disqualify any prospective bidder if found that they have submitted falsified documents and/or information, and the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, to waive any defects or formalities found therein and to accept such bid or a part thereof as may be deemed most advantageous to PAGCOR, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Please address all communications to the undersigned.

(Sgd.) **CARMENCITA A. ESPINOSA**
Chairman
Bids & Awards Committee (BAC) "B"

(PDI - May 25 & 27, 2002)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON, KULTURA AT ISPORTS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS
DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines

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Office of the Undersecretary

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Direct Line: 631-8640
Trunk Line: 632-1361 locals 2007/2221
Email address: espangan@pacific.net.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education through the General Services Division is inviting all Pest Control to apply for eligibility and to bid for Massive Termite and Pests Control. The approved budget for the project is P1,275,000.00.

All interested pest control operator must submit a Letter of Intent before obtaining bid documents starting **May 30, 2002** at the BAC Secretariat Office, Rm. 112-A, Mabini Bldg., DepEd Complex, Pasig City or visit the DepEd Website at *http://www.deped.gov.ph*.

A pre-bid conference will be held on **June 11, 2002**, 10:00 a.m. at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Bldg. 1, DepEd Complex, Pasig City. The Submission and Opening of Bids will be on **June 25, 2002** at the same time and place mentioned above.

DepEd-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO S. PANGAN**
Undersecretary
Chaiman, DepEd-BAC

(PDI - May 25 & June 1, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Intramuros, Manila

IN THE MATTER OF DEPUTIZING THE NATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION, THE NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION AND THE MANILA ELECTRIC COMPANY IN CONNECTION WITH THE JULY 15, 2002 SYNCHRONIZED BARANGAY AND SK ELECTIONS
x-----------------------------------x

BENIPAYO, Alfredo L.	Chairman
TANCANGCO, Luzviminda G.	Commissioner
JAVIER, Rufino S.B.	Commissioner
LANTION, Ralph C.	Commissioner
SADAIN, Mehol K.	Commissioner
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino, Jr. A.	Commissioner

Promulgated: 23 May 2002

RESOLUTION NO. 4800

WHEREAS, the Commission on Elections is legally mandated to conduct and ensure the holding of free, orderly, honest, peaceful and credible elections on July 15, 2002;

WHEREAS, for said purposes, there is an imperative need to provide the distribution and retrieval, polling and canvassing centers and the deputized agencies of the Commission in the area with sufficient electrical power supply during the critical days of the elections;

NOW THEREFORE, the Commission on Elections, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, Omnibus Election Code and Republic Acts No. 6646, 7166 and 9164 and other related election laws, RESOLVED, as it hereby RESOLVES, as follows:

SECTION 1. ***Deputation*** - To deputize the National Electrification Administration, the National Power Corporation and the Manila Electric Company including its respective Head or Chief Operating Officer in connection with the conduct of the Synchronized Barangay and SK Elections on July 15, 2002;

SECTION 2. ***Duties and Functions*** - As such deputies, they shall have the following duties and functions.

1. Provide and maintain stable and continuous electric power requirements to the Commission from July 14 to 17, 2002;
2. They are hereby authorized to shut off other users of electric power such as industries and other large commercial establishments during the said period to about 300 megawatts and to allocate these savings of electric power for distribution to strategic areas for use during the critical period of elections and for this purpose to:
   a) Secure, as much as possible, voluntary load curtailment commitments from the industries and large establishments prior to exercising their powers of unilaterally curtailing the power needs of said industries and large establishments;
   b) Give priority to the electrical power needs at the distribution and retrieval centers, voting and counting places at the precinct level and counting places at the precinct level and at the canvassing centers; and
   c) Adopt such other measures as maybe necessary to accomplish the purposes of this deputation.

Let the Executive Director implement this Resolution and the Education and Information Department shall cause the immediate publication of this resolution in two (2) newspapers of general circulation and furnish copies thereof to all parties concerned.

SO ORDERED.

(Sgd.) **ALFREDO L. BENIPAYO**
Chairman

(Sgd.) **LUZVIMINDA G. TANCANGCO**
Commissioner

(Sgd.) **RUFINO S.B. JAVIER**
Commissioner

(Sgd.) **RALPH C. LANTION**
Commissioner

(Sgd.) **MEHOL K. SADAIN**
Commissioner

(Sgd.) **RESURRECCION Z. BORRA**
Commissioner

(Sgd.) **FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.**
Commissioner

(PDI--May 25, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

RULES ON THE LIQUOR BAN IN CONNECTION WITH THE JULY 15, 2002 SYNCHRONIZED BARANGGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS.
x-----------------------------------x

BENIPAYO, Alfredo L.	Chairman
TANCANGCO, Luzviminda G.	Commissioner
JAVIER, Rufino S.B.	Commissioner
LANTION, Ralph C.	Commissioner
SADAIN, Mehol K.	Commissioner
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino, Jr. A.	Commissioner

Promulgated: 23 May 2002

RESOLUTION NO. 4799

WHEREAS, the Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines provides:

Sec. 261. **Prohibited Acts**. - The following shall be guilty of an election offense:

"xxx xxx xxx

(dd) x x x (1) Any person who sells, furnishes, offers, buys, serves or takes intoxicating liquor on the days fixed by law for the registration of voters in the polling place, or on the day before the election or on election day. Provided, That hotels and other establishments duly certified by the Department of Tourism as tourist-oriented and habitually in the business of catering to foreign tourists may be exempted for justifiable reasons upon prior authority of the Commission. Provided, That foreign tourist taking intoxicating liquor in said authorized hotels or establishments are exempted from the provisions of this sub-paragraph."

WHEREAS, violation of said prohibited acts shall be punishable with imprisonment of not less than one year but not more than six years and shall not be subject to probation, and in addition, the guilty party shall suffer disqualification to hold public office and deprivation of the right of suffrage;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Commission on Elections (Commission) pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, and other election laws, has RESOLVED to promulgate as it hereby promulgates the following implementing rules:

SECTION 1. **Prohibited Acts** - It shall be unlawful for any person, including owners and managers of hotels and establishments to sell, furnish, offer, buy, serve or take intoxicating liquor anywhere in the Philippines.

SECTION 2. **Prohibition Period** - The liquor ban shall be in force and effect on May 20 and 21, 2002, the day before the election (July 14, 2002) and on election day (July 15, 2002).

SECTION 3. **Exemption** - Hotels and other establishments duly certified by the Department of Tourism as tourist-oriented and habitually in the business of catering to foreign tourists may be exempted from the liquor ban. **PROVIDED** they secure prior written authority from the Commission as provided for in Section 4 below, upon showing that there are justifiable reasons therefore.

Foreign tourists taking intoxicating liquor in said authorized hotels or establishments are exempted from the prohibition.

SECTION 4. **Where to apply for and secure exemption** - Applications for exemption together with supporting documents, shall be filed with, and duly acted upon by the following: The Office of Regional Election Director, in cases of hotels and other establishments located in the National Capital Region; Provincial Election Supervisors with respect to establishments located in the municipalities within their respective provinces, and City Election Officers with respect to those located within their respective cities/districts.

SECTION 5. **Conditions for the grant of exemptions** - Exemption may be granted only upon compliance and submission of the following:

a.) the request/petition/application for exemption must be under oath and must contain a statement that the hotel/ establishment operators/owners have not been convicted for an election offense;

b.) Certification by the Department of Tourism shall state that the requesting hotel or establishment is tourist-oriented and is habitually in the business of catering to foreign tourists;

c.) Certification by the Department of Tourism to prove that said hotel or establishment is currently licensed to do business; and

d.) Certification by the Department of Tourism to prove that the individual or establishment has paid the required taxes and/or fees imposed by the government or any of its agencies or instrumentalities

SECTION 6. **Revocation of exemption** - The exemption granted may be revoked or set aside by the Commission upon petition of any interested party on showing, among others, that the reason upon which the exemption was made does not exist or is not justifiable, or that the requesting party or applicant has committed misrepresentation in the application, or introduced or submitted falsified documents.

SECTION 7. **Who shall implement** - The Philippine National Police (PNP), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Regional Election Directors (RED), Ass. Regional Election Directors (ARED), Provincial Election Supervisors (PES), Election Officers, and the Comelec Election Laws Enforcement Team (ELET), if any, which will be fielded by the Commission in specific areas, shall implement this resolution.

SECTION 8. **Effectivity** - This resolution shall take effect on the seventh day after its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

SECTION 9. **Dissemination** - The Education and Information Department shall cause the immediate publication of this resolution for two (2) consecutive days, in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation and shall furnish copies thereof to the Department of Tourism, Association of Hotels and Restaurants, Regional Election Directors, Provincial Election Supervisors, Election Officers, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police, the National Bureau of Investigation and the accredited Citizens Arm of the Commission.

(Sgd.) **ALFREDO L. BENIPAYO**
Chairman

(Sgd.) **LUZVIMINDA G. TANCANGCO**
Commissioner

(Sgd.) **RUFINO S.B. JAVIER**
Commissioner

(Sgd.) **RALPH C. LANTION**
Commissioner

(Sgd.) **MEHOL K. SADAIN**
Commissioner

(Sgd.) **RESURRECCION Z. BORRA**
Commissioner

(Sgd.) **FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.**
Commissioner

(PDI--May 25 & 26, 2002)

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OBITUARIES

Jesus said: "I am the Resurrection,
if anyone believes in Me,
even though he dies he will live,
and whoever lives and believes in Me
will never die."

His Excellency, Most Rev. Gaudencio B. Rosales, D.D.,
Archbishop of Lipa,
His Excellency, Most Rev. Salvador Q. Quizon, D.D.,
Auxiliary Bishop of Lipa,
The Clergy, Religious and Lay Faithful
of the Archdiocese of Lipa

Together with the Kalaw Family

announce with joy and hope the triumphant crossing over
from us to the everlasting love of the Father of our beloved

REV. MSGR. REYNALDO K. KALAW

on 23 May 2002 at the age of 79,
after more than 46 fruitful years of service
in the Lord's Vineyard.

His mortal remains lie in state at the Resurrection Chapel
of San Sebastian Cathedral, Lipa City.

The Concelebrated Mass of the Resurrection will be offered
at 2:00 p.m., Monday, 27 May 2002,
at the San Sebastian Cathedral.

Interment follows immediately at the Lipa Catholic Cemetery,
Antipolo del Norte, Lipa City.

Please omit flowers.
Donations to the St. Joseph Seniorate,
Home for the Aged and Sick Priests of the Archdiocese of Lipa
will be deeply appreciated.

Our Dearly Beloved KongKong

GEORGE L. CO (CHO CHUN)

Who peacefully joined his Creator on May 23, 2002.

His bereaved wife **ROBERTA**; children & in-laws **NOEL & LOURDES, JOEL & MAGGIE, CHERYL & GERRY, GEORGE JR. & BETY, ROBERTO & BING, DARRYL & LOURDES**; grandchildren, friends and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City (Annex - Chapel 2).

Holy Mass will be offered daily at 6:00 p.m.

Interment will be on Wednesday, May 29, 2002 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Chinese Cemetery.

SALOME D. REYES

of Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur and
Quezon City
Died on May 19, 2002
and whose remains lie in state
at La Funeraria Paz,
Quezon City.
Will be buried on May 26, 2002,
after the 9:00 AM Mass
at Loyola Memorial Park,
Marikina City.

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John 14:6

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"Happy are those who have died in the Lord; let them rest from their labours, for their good deeds go with them."

Revelation 14:13

RUFINA ABELLANA KING

July 30, 1912 – May 24, 2002

Has peacefully returned to the loving embrace of her Creator.

Her beloved husband **JUANITO**; children **ELENA & GARY SUN, ROBIN & ELEANOR HILL, RICARIDO & ROSALINDA TIU, LUIS SR. & IMMA ALIVIADO, MARIO & HAYDEE CORTES**; sister **DOLORES**; brother **CECILIO**; grandchildren **EDWARD, MEG & JOCELINO, KEN & MILJOY, LYN & BRENT, TAN, REGAN & ROSELLE, ROSS RICA, ROSS ANN, RICHARD, JASON, JONG, HELENA, JOHN, TINGTING, YENYEN, MAY, GOLDA, DAVID, JOSEPH**; great-grandchildren **MATTHEW, SAMANTHA, NICOLAS, KARL, JUSTIN, RUSSELL**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her mortal remains lie in state at the Divine Mercy Chapel of Sacred Heart Parish. Vigil Mass is celebrated everynight at 8:00 p.m. and Funeral Mass will be at 7:45 a.m. on Sunday, May 26, 2002.

Interment will follow at Cebu Memorial Park.

"Though the mountains leave their place and the hills be shaken,
my love shall never leave you... says the Lord, who has mercy on you"

Isaiah 54:10

Our Dearly Beloved

TERESITA BRIONES CUAJUNCO

has peacefully joined her Creator on May 22, 2002
at the age of 74.

Her loving husband **Fidel Jr.** (†); children **Victor** and **Babes, Tess** and **Alex Santos, Delfin** and **Eileen**; grandchildren **Ian, Robby, Nikki, Steven, Kevin, Samantha, David, Diego** and **Daniel**; sister **Nene**; brothers **Joe, Jake** and **Totoy**; in-laws **Lucy Rita, Joe Guevarra, Greg Francisco, Alice Briones** and **Tess Briones**; cousins, nephews and nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe.

She will be laid to rest at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque on May 28, Tuesday morning.

ATTY. ORLANDO J. CORUÑA, C.E.

of BF HOMES, QUEZON CITY and MARAMAG, BUKIDNON
FORMER DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF BLDGS. & REAL PROPERTY MGMT.

has sincerely joined the Lord in His Kingdom
on May 23, 2002 at the age of 77.

His bereaved wife **Teds**; daughter **Judy** and grandchildren **Gian** and **Clarice**; parents **Toribio, Sr.** (†) and **Elena** (†); brothers and sisters, **Napoleon** (†) and wife **Pacita** (†); **Carolina** and **Germinio S. Cedre**; **Melchora** and **Fidel S. Diego** (†); **Eleanor** and **Celso S. Miquiabas, Sr., Priscilla** and **Samson B. Turiñgan, Sr., Preciosa** (†) and **Napoleon** (†); sister **Juanita, RVM**; **Toribio, Jr.** and **Lina**; **Marietta** and **George Biehsel**; **Jose, Sr.** and **Hedy**; his nephews, nieces and grandchildren request the kind readers to please pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Presidential Suite B, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City, where a Funeral Mass will be held on Tuesday, May 28, 2002, at 1:00 P.M. Interment will immediately follow at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City.

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"Whosoever believes in Him shall not perish
but have everlasting life"

John 3:10

Victor M. Rivilla

passed away peacefully in the grace of our Lord
on the 22nd day of May 2002 at the age of 57,

devoted husband to Elaine Villar

Loving father to Raphael, Victor, Jr. and Hanna Bagatsing

Beloved grandfather to Bryan

Dear son to Don Carlos B. Rivilla, Sr. (+) and
Doña Marta Mijares de Rivilla (+)

Caring brother to Marta & Ernesto Kramer, Carlos, Jr. (+) &
Florinda Esteban (+), Luis Tirso & Lourdes Cojuangco and
Rodolfo (+) & Percida Sison

Beloved son-in-law to Luis (+) and Charing Villar and brother-in-law
to Malu & Willie Chipeco, Christine & Alex Pineda, Louie & Chuchi Villar,
Saripaz & Peter Tan and Karen & Glenn Fuentebella.

We, his family, relatives and friends,
request those whose lives have been touched by our dearest Victor
and all pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie at the Capilla del Señor
Santuario de San Antonio, McKinley Rd. Forbes Park, Makati City
Interment will be on Tuesday, the 28th of May 2002
at The Rivilla Mausoleum, Manila Memorial Paranaque
following the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Santuario de San Antonio.

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang ◉ Assistant Editor Stella O. Gonzales

Eye docs say iridology is 'pseudo-science'

By Raul C. Dancel

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

THE COUNTRY'S leading association of ophthalmologists has issued a warning against a "scam" involving an unproven clinical method that, it says, has resulted in the deaths of at least two people and duped hundreds of overseas Filipino workers.

Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology Inc. (PAO) chair Ma. Dominga Padilla warned the public not to fall for a method of diagnosing physical ailments and diseases known as iridology.

Iridology—also referred to as iris diagnosis—stems from a belief that the iris of the eye can be used to diagnose and treat, using tonics and herbs, a number of diseases, including diabetes and cancer.

"Iridology is a pseudo-science that we are asking the government to regulate," Padilla told the INQUIRER.

"The mushrooming of so-called iridologists has resulted in a growing number of patients who have been medically mismanaged, leading to devastating economic and health consequences for these hapless individuals," she said.

Treatments stopped

Padilla said that at least two people had died after they went to an iridologist to seek treatment.

Padilla said one had insulin-dependent diabetes who was advised to discontinue her insulin treatment and instead use tonics and herbal preparations. Another had ovarian cancer and had her treatment delayed upon her iridologist's advice.

The first patient went into a coma and died, while the other eventually sought professional medical advice, but by then it was too late.

Iridology is not the "wonder cure" that its adherents profess it to be, said Padilla.

"We have seen patients with optic neuritis (inflammation of the optic nerve) who were made to buy thousands of pesos worth of tonic drinks and vitamins from iridologists only to have their conditions worsen," she said.

She added that there were glaucoma patients who went blind because they were told to stop their medication.

"Latest scientific evidence based on an extensive systematic review of iridology has shown that iridology is not a useful diagnostic tool, and that it has the potential to do damage in economic and health terms," Padilla said.

Citing a paper by physician Edzard Ernst of the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom that appeared in the scientific journal "Research in Complementary Medicine," Padilla said even advocates of alternative medicine were writing off iridology as a useful diagnostic tool.

Inconclusive tests

According to Quackwatch Inc., a US-based nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to combat health-related frauds, myths, fads and fallacies, tests conducted on iridology have so far been inconclusive.

In 1979, three leading iridologists failed a test in which they were asked to determine who out of 143 persons had kidney ailments. Forty-eight had been diagnosed with ailments while the rest had normal kidneys.

One iridologist said 88 percent of the normal patients had kidney disease, while another said 74 percent of patients sick enough to need kidney treatment were normal.

More recently, five leading Dutch iridologists failed a similar test in which they were shown stereo color slides of the right iris of 78 people, half of whom had gallbladder disease. None of the five could distinguish between patients with gallbladder disease and those who were healthy. Nor did their diagnoses match.

Victimizing OFWs

Padilla said PAO wants the government to regulate both physicians and non-physicians using iridology "to protect our people from its potential hazards."

"This scam has been made worse by the fact that it is happening right under the nose of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration," she said.

Padilla disclosed that several iridology clinics had been offering an P11,000-cure for color blindness—an untreatable congenital condition—to seamen desperate to land a job abroad.

"We have no problem with them (iridologists) offering herbs and tonics and false hopes, but when they start convincing their patients to withdraw medication or treatment, that's another story," Padilla said.

The Department of Health is forming a task force to determine whether iridology can be accepted as an alternative method of diagnosing physical ailments and diseases.

Dr. Alfonso Lagaya, head of the health department's Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health, told the INQUIRER the task force will try to determine whether iridology is safe, effective and inexpensive enough to be widely used.

It might take two to six months for the task force to complete its study and come up with its recommendations, he said.

Eyes are mirrors of health

By Dr. Josef De Ubaldo, DSc.
Contributor

ONE of the most traumatic experiences a person can have is discovering that he has a serious, potentially fatal disease. People find themselves asking, "Why didn't I find out about it sooner?"

Regular consultations with physicians may well warn an individual of impending health problems. But many people are hesitant to undergo routine blood exams, scans and tests.

However, there are alternative diagnostic procedures that are less invasive, less costly and less risky. One is iridology—the art and science of assessing physical health by examining a person's iris.

Iridology is affordable, easy to perform and noninvasive. Most important, it offers early warning signs on diseases while they are still at the subclinical stage.

Most iridologists use a special magnifier to examine their patients' eyes. Some also take photographs of their patients' irises for prolonged study and comparison to charts.

An iridologist must ensure that all possible factors that might interfere with the accuracy of his diagnosis are accounted for. These include intake of drugs, the intensity of ambient light, the patient's age, race and any previous injury that might influence size, shape, mobility and color of the iris.

Predictive capabilities

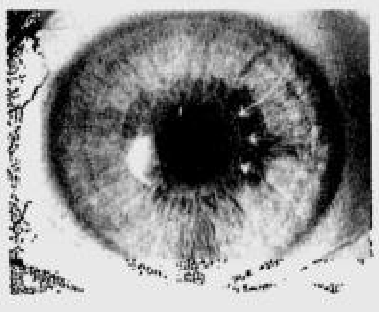
The best approach to discussing the power of iridology would be to describe the shortcomings of modern diagnostic medicine.

To assess their patients' health, doctors depend on modern laboratory, ultrasonic or radiological techniques, which are only able to detect disease when the pathology has already reached an advanced stage.

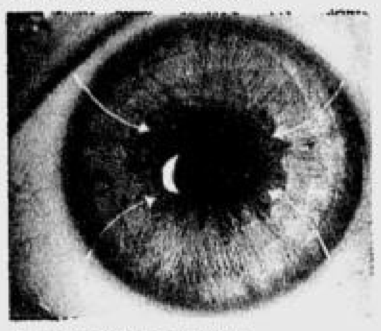
What makes iridology a more sensitive method of assessment than routine medical procedures is that it can predict, based on subtle tissue chemical imbalances, where trouble spots will develop long before actual structural damage occurs. This gives the patient more lead-time to prepare against illness than standard medical examinations.

Another advantage of iridology is that it gives the examiner a glimpse into the patient's entire body.

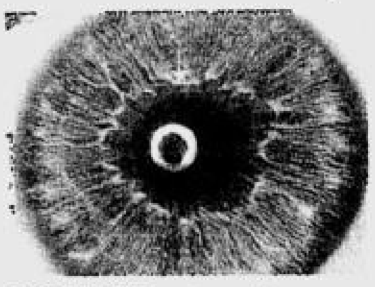
Thus, while a patient might pay a large sum for various tests that assess different body systems, he would spend much less for a comprehensive iris diagnosis.



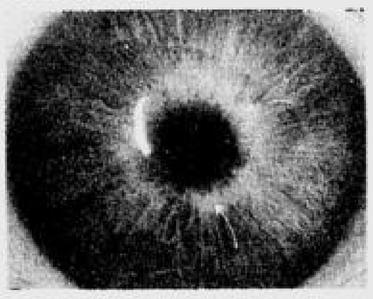
EXTREME white in the stomach area of the iris indicates an overacidic stomach.



A LIGHT halo in the stomach area indicates an underacidic stomach.



A DROPPED autonomic nerve wreath indicates transverse colon prolapsus.



A THICK white nerve wreath indicates nerve spasm and spastic colon.

Iris as health gauge

Many people do not realize how expressive the iris is as a mirror of the internal processes of the body.

The human body is covered by skin, which is relatively opaque and does not offer much information about the neurovascular changes beneath its surface. The iris, on the other hand, is supplied by a rich network of blood vessels and nerve endings, many of which are directly visible because of the transparent, crystal clear nature of the cornea which lies just above it.

Blood vessels react to influences such as drugs, illness, fatigue and temperature by constricting or dilating, which in turn create corresponding fluctuations in blood flow to the iris. The topography of the iris therefore constitutes a dynamic medium through which changes in different body tissues can be expressed.

Advantages, limitations

Few diagnostic methods are as simple and patient-friendly as iridology. The method requires no cutting or insertion of any object in the patient's body. It involves no exposure to any potentially hazardous media, such as radiation or chemicals. The patient need not assume any difficult or uncomfortable position for a long period of time.

The equipment used is relatively simple, inexpensive, and requires little or no maintenance.

The primary strength of iridology, however, is its predictive value.

Iridology does have its limitations and one of them is that it is a purely diagnostic discipline. It indicates dysfunction in organs or tissues, but does not make specific diagnosis like acute glomerulonepheritis (a kidney disease affecting the capillaries of the glomeruli).

It provides an invaluable supplement in obtaining a complete picture of a person's state of health. It is very useful by itself, but is even more valuable when combined with other diagnostic methods whose findings it may corroborate or contradict.

Doctor-iridologist

While some doctors who are not familiar with this field may be hostile toward it, they are in a potentially ideal position to benefit from the practice of this diagnostic technique. With their training in anatomy and physiology, they understand the changes and patterns manifested in the human iris.

Doctors enjoy a traditional strong position of authority and can best advise their patients in taking action against diseases detected through iridology.

Doctors can find the best balance between the use of standard laboratory diagnostic procedures and iridology.

Given the versatility, safety, affordability and accuracy of iridology, its acceptance among members of the medical profession cannot be far off.

Until that time, however, awareness of this alternative diagnostic modality must be cultivated.

When the public benefits from the ethical and responsible use of iridology by expert practitioners, patients will eventually demand that their doctors offer them the benefits of this fascinating and useful art.

(Editor's note: The author is the president of the Philippine Federation of Natural Health and Environment Friendly Organizations. He is an ambassador to the World Federation on Integrated Medicine and is a member of the committee on the Freedom of Choice in Medicine.)

Keep minds open, docs asked

By Tessa R. Salazar

DESPITE the controversy on iridology, conventional medicine is opening up to complementary and alternative medicine (CAM).

Dr. Parkash T. Mansukhani of the Davao Doctors Hospital said the growing number of patients who resort to CAM has created an impact on the practice of conventional medicine.

And some therapies that may be considered alternative today may be incorporated into conventional medicine in the future, he said.

"Whether we like it or not, there are a lot of products in the market, especially the herbal and nonherbal therapies, available to the public. People have to be open to it," Mansukhani told the INQUIRER after a lecture on the multidisciplinary approach to patient care during the recent Philippine College of Physicians convention.

"As physicians, we need to inquire about all the medications and therapies the patient is taking, which may help explain unexpected findings. Doctors need to understand CAM's potential benefits and limitations. Doctors need to address the training and practice of CAM within their own organizations," he said.

Mansukhani said complementary medicine combines the strong points of conventional and alternative medicine, offering a patient a more holistic approach to his illness.

Obstacles

In his abstract, Mansukhani said physicians needed to have an open mind, a nonjudgmental attitude and evaluate evidence regarding alternative therapies "with the same rigor" with which they evaluate conventional therapies.

He admitted that there were problems in studying the efficacy of nonconventional therapies but "rigorously designed clinical trials are possible and there is an increasing quantity and quality of research in CAM."

WHO pushes for safe alternative therapies

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

THE GROWING popularity of traditional and alternative medicine has not only given rise to safety concerns among health practitioners and consumers. It has also raised questions on policy, regulation, evidence, biodiversity and preservation and protection of traditional knowledge used in these alternative treatments.

To address these concerns, the World Health Organization has released a global plan to assist countries in regulating traditional or alternative medicine to make its use safer, sustainable and more accessible to their populations.

The global market for traditional therapies stands at $60 billion a year and is steadily growing. Even in wealthy countries, growing numbers of patients rely on alternative medicine for preventive or palliative care.

In France, 75 percent of the population has used complementary medicine at least once. In Germany, 77 percent of pain clinics provide acupuncture. In the United Kingdom, expenditure on complementary or alternative medicine stands at $2.3 billion per year.

Dangers

But problems may arise out of incorrect use of traditional therapies.

For instance, the herb *Ma Huang* (ephedra) is traditionally used in China to treat short-term respiratory congestion. In the United States, the herb was marketed as a dietary aid, whose long-term use led to at least a dozen deaths, heart attacks and strokes.

In Belgium, at least 70 people required renal transplant or dialysis for interstitial fibrosis of the kidney after taking the wrong herb from the *Aristolochiaceae* family, again as a dietary aid.

Standardization

But while traditional medicine has been fully integrated into the health systems of China, North and South Korea and Vietnam, many countries have not collected and standardized evidence on this type of health care.

There is also the risk that further commercialization through unregulated use of traditional remedies will make these therapies unaffordable to many who rely on them as their primary source of health care.

About 25 percent of modern medicines are descended from plants first used traditionally.

The efficacy of acupuncture in relieving pain and nausea has been well established.

Randomized controlled trials also offer convincing evidence that therapies such as hypnosis and relaxation techniques can alleviate anxiety, panic disorders and insomnia.

Other studies have shown that yoga can reduce asthma attacks while *tai ji* techniques can help the elderly reduce their fear of falls.

In Africa, North America and Europe, three out of four people living with HIV/AIDS use some form of traditional or complementary treatment for various symptoms and conditions.

The Chinese herbal remedy *Artemisia annua*, used for almost 2,000 years, has recently been found to be effective against resistant malaria and could prevent many of the 800,000 deaths among children from severe malaria each year.

Eternal youth for man and food

By Massie K. Santos
Contributor

SENIOR CITIZEN

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

WHEN the Spaniards arrived in the New World centuries ago, Ponce de Leon believed that the Fountain of Youth was in Florida. The town of St. Augustine still marks the site where De Leon first set foot in the United States. He never found the fountain, and no one in Florida has either, judging by the number of retirees there today.

Still, that hasn't ended the quest for eternal youth.

From Botox injections to various hormone treatments, people are willing to part with a good amount of money to look and feel young.

In 1998, researchers announced that the enzyme telomerase was the key to understanding why cells, and therefore human beings, age.

At the ends of each chromosome are short DNA sequences called telomeres. Each time a cell goes through a cycle of replication and division, the telomeres are shortened. When there are no more telomeres, the cell stops replicating and starts aging.

In the presence of telomerase, however, the cut portion of the telomeres is replaced before the cell cycle begins again, so the aging process is delayed.

While cells do have telomerase activity through childhood and adolescence, the enzyme shuts off sometime during adulthood. Scientists have found that tampering with cell aging increases the chance of encouraging cancer cells to grow along with normal cells.

There is no way to keep the telomeres from eventually being cut though, which is why there will most likely never be a telomerase treatment in the market, unless it's marketed for the senior citizen crowd. If prescribed, however, will anyone actually have a pharmacy fill it? Taking Viagra is one thing, but it seems no one—male or female—is willing to admit his age these days.

Vacuum-sealed plastics

This is probably why one branch of anti-aging research has been focused on prolonging the life of various foodstuffs instead.

In one episode of the now-defunct TV series "Eerie, Indiana," Omri Katz meets two boys who have been in seventh grade for 30 years. Their youthful appearance had been preserved because each night their mother tucked them into bed and sealed them inside life-sized plastic containers that maintained a tight vacuum seal. (How this family even managed to breathe in a sealed environment is a question the scriptwriters never answered.)

It was only when Katz broke in their house one night, opened the containers, and broke the seal did his classmates finally age.

Three-year sandwich

This episode was probably what inspired US military scientists to develop the latest addition to the menu of its soldiers abroad: sandwiches in vacuum-sealed plastic bags that stay fresh for up to three years.

Thrown from a plane into the Arctic wilderness or the Gobi desert, the sandwiches should stay intact and edible. They're designed to keep for up to three years at room temperature (26 degrees Celsius) or for six months in the heat (38 degrees Celsius).

And despite the infomercials and public outcry for meals free of chemical preservatives, these sandwiches are treated to prevent bacterial growth and maintain the water content of each ingredient so no one ever breaks the seal and bites into a soggy meal. Not to worry though, the chemicals don't seem to affect the sandwich flavors, which are currently pepperoni and barbecue chicken.

Then again, since soldiers were the taste testers for these meals, and they live on MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) in the field, their taste buds may not exactly be the most trustworthy.

For civilians, too

Scientists hope to eventually have soldiers munching on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, as well as pizzas and burritos. Based on the descriptions of the usual MREs, the soldiers must be hoping the scientists get these fast foods out to them soon.

Even ordinary civilians will get a chance to sample these new meals, since any new developments by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) and the military in the food department find their way to supermarket shelves in time.

Freeze-dried coffee and processed cheese were military inventions after all, as were dehydrated eggs, though the latter doesn't really look very appealing even when mixed with water and cooked to make a plate of scrambled eggs.

Still, by ensuring that food never spoils, countless hours that could have been spent cleaning out the refrigerator and throwing out spoiled food can now be used to do other things—shop, watch TV, or spend more time with the family.

Forget the current infomercials for all the different vacuum sealers out there and instead imagine the ad campaign for the three-year sandwich.

Speaking of unappetizing meals, Nasa sells freeze-dried ice cream in Florida and the thin foil packet just doesn't have the same visual appeal as a large scoop of ice cream on a waffle cone. That's probably one reason astronauts don't talk much about what they eat.

(The author may be reached at massie@massie.com.)

Child development and classical music

By Charles E. Buban

ANY mother who has sung lullabies to her crying child knows the ability of music to transcend language. Now, researchers are saying that music can do much more for a child than just lull him to sleep.

A recent Harvard University study concluded that listening to classical music and reading help children learn faster and at an earlier age.

They also found evidence that classical music can strengthen a child's ability to learn math, dance, reading, creative thinking and visual arts skills.

To support these findings Enfalac/Mead Johnson teamed up with the Grammy Foundation, a nonprofit arm of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences to bring the power of music to children throughout the world.

Known as the Smart Symphonies Early Childhood Development Program, Enfalac/Mead Johnson launched an enhanced audio CD compilation of Grammy-winning classical music and distributed them to mothers and babies around the world. It sold more than six million copies since its launch in 1999.

Stimulates the brain

According to Mead Johnson, Smart Symphony is based on the finding that playing certain strains of classical music enhances the way children think, learn and relate to others.

The complex rhythm and melodies of classical music help stimulate brain activities, which develop intellectual skills and encourage discipline, attention, fluency and self-reliance.

Generation E

Smart Symphonies is one of three programs under the Generation E Smart System.

According to Mead Johnson, Generation E refers to children growing up in a more advanced and competitive world, nourished by specific combinations of smart nutrition.

Aside from Smart Symphony, the two other components of the system include Smart Nutrition, which expounds on the importance of science-based nutrition, and Smart Play, which believes that carefully selected toys, accessories and assisted play suggestions can make babies smarter.

Mead Johnson believes that these three programs will give rise to a new generation of toddlers possessing a properly developed brain that will help them cope with today's fast-paced environment.

The company, known for its infant milk formula products, suggested the following activities to help your baby's emotional, social and intellectual growth.

- Move your baby to the beat of the music while holding him.
- Adjust movement to match changes in speed, volume, or instruments being played.
- Hum and sing along with tunes.
- Add words, such as your baby's name, while singing along.
- Try to massage the baby while you sing.
- Use your baby's favorite toy to dance with the beat.
- Play favorite games like "peekaboo" to the rhythms you hear.

The poetry of physics

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

ONE of the main reasons I love doing mathematics is not that I am a masochist, as a friend laughingly commented. I love math partly because it is one of the most beautiful systems in existence. Sure, its grandeur may be austere and at times noncommittal, but there often is perfection nonetheless.

Math is also a fundamental tool of the scientist. My friend Dr. Doreen Fernandez, not only a literature laureate but a lover of well-expressed science as well, forwarded an article from the Feb. 21 issue of The Guardian. Here Graham Farmelo, the contributing editor to "It Must Be Beautiful: Great Equations of Modern Science" (Granta, 2002), expresses his reaction to his favorite equation.

He starts by comparing equations to poetry:

"Who was the 20th century's greatest English-speaking poet? TS Eliot, WBYeats, Sylvia Plath? Not for me. My nomination is the theoretician Paul Dirac, honorary poet laureate of modern physics. It is a status he richly deserves because of his amazing ability to write down fundamental equations—the poems of science. Whereas poetry uses highly charged combinations of words, equations are the most succinct descriptions of the aspect of reality they describe. Dirac's most famous poem enabled him successfully to predict the existence of antimatter, a triumph that his colleague, the quantum pioneer Werner Heisenberg, judged to be the supreme achievement of 20th century physics."

New particle

Dirac (1902-1985) discovered that equation in 1927, when he was a fellow at St. John's College in Cambridge. Taking off from the then recently discovered fields of relativity and quantum mechanics, Dirac was able to theoretically explain the spin of the electron (which was observed in experiments in 1925).

But that's not all. In 1931 he used his equation to predict a new particle with exactly the same mass as the electron but with opposite electric charge.

The existence of the positron, as it came to be called, was validated by Carl Anderson in an experiment in 1932. By the way, this new particle is part of what is now called antimatter, which scientists believe was present at the beginning of our universe—during the Big Bang. In this sense then, Dirac has (unwittingly) given us a glimpse into the dawn of our space and time.

And that's still not all. Dirac went beyond his equation, and did some others. In 1931he predicted another new particle, the magnetic monopole.

Our normal conception of magnetic poles is that they come in pairs (such as north and south), but Dirac believed that there were particles with just one pole. Up to this day, however, no one has yet observed this experimentally. But I have faith in Dirac's equations.

Perhaps the most surprising feature of Dirac's work is that he never bothered about the usefulness of his equations. He was guided by a sense of beauty.

'Pretty math'

With some irony, Farmelo describes Dirac's working style: "With what might be described as characteristically English pragmatism, Dirac made estheticism into a practical tool (quite fitting for someone who trained as an engineer). Rather than setting out to solve problems, his work was one long search for the 'pretty mathematics' that underlies the workings of the universe. He once said that a good deal of his work consisted of 'simply examining mathematical quantities that physicists use and trying to fit them together in an interesting way, regardless of any application the work may have.' This is a bit like trying to write a poem by assembling the words in an attractive order and then seeing if it reads as poetry."

This preference for esthetics rather than practicality was revealed in a speech he gave before Harvard graduate students in 1974. He encouraged them to focus on the beauty of their equations, not with what their meanings might be. This attitude was condemned by some scientists.

But even the most abstruse equations, as long as they are beautiful, eventually prove to be of use in describing our world.

Such was the case with Riemannian geometry, which a century later Einstein used for general relativity. Such was also the case with Dirac's equations.

What can account for this "unreasonable" applicability of abstract math? Perhaps because at its core, our world is indeed beautiful.

Now I have to get myself a copy of the book.

The case of the special child, Part 2

By Rafael R. Castillo, M.D.

SOMETIME ago, we wrote about Noel, who had an attention deficit or hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD). Most children experience occasional difficulty concentrating in tasks that they are assigned to do—sitting still, paying attention to a teacher or controlling impulsive behavior. However, for some children, the problem is unusually severe that it interferes with their day-to-day activities and their lives as a whole. Such is the case of Noel and Tyrone B., a 7-year-old child with AD/MD.

AD/MD is a developmental problem in young children. It is a disability characterized by inappropriate impulsivity, inattention, and most of the time, hyperactivity. Approximately 5 to 10 percent of schoolchildren are affected by this disorder which is diagnosed 10 times more often in boys than in girls.

Genetic transmission by the father to his son is implicated in AD/MD. For most people, information enters the brain and they process it and formulate a response. Through the synapse—the junction between nerve cells—a delay in the transmission of impulse occurs which regulates the resulting action. For AD/MD patients, there is no delay. An AD/MD patient's thought races like a speeding car, which has lost its brakes leading to exaggerated or hyperactive actions.

MEDICAL FILES

Until recent years, it was believed that children outgrew AD/MD in adolescence. Perhaps, this was because hyperactivity often diminishes during the teen years. However, it is now known that many symptoms continue into adulthood.

Classic example

Tyrone is a classic example of a child with AD/MD. He was in kindergarten when his teacher noticed his unusual inattentiveness. He would sometimes scream his lungs out in the middle of a class discussion and did not seem to listen when directly spoken to. There were also times when he could not properly engage in class and group activities.

Upon the advice of a teacher, Tyrone's parents opted to delay his entrance to kindergarten for one year. Even so, his lack of attention and hyperactivity soon became apparent and what ensued was a series of complaints from other parents and teachers.

Each year, Tyrone's parents prayed and hope that Tyrone would one day act like a normal kid. But the school administration became impatient and it was unwilling to make any adjustments for Tyrone.

International guidelines

All children show signs of behaviors associated with AD/MD at one time or another, thus the international guidelines for determining whether a child has AD/MD are very specific. To be diagnosed with AD/MD, the individual must exhibit 12 of these 18 characteristics:

- Fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes.
- Has difficulty sustaining attention.
- Does not appear to listen.
- Struggles to follow through on instructions.
- Has difficulty with organization.
- Avoids or dislikes tasks requiring sustained mental effort.
- Loses things.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

- Is easily distracted.
- Is forgetful in daily activities.
- Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in chair.
- Has difficulty remaining seated.
- Runs about or climbs excessively.
- Has difficulty engaging in activities quietly. Acts as if driven by a motor. Talks excessively.
- Blurts out answers before questions have been completed.
- Has difficulty waiting or taking turns.
- Interrupts or intrudes upon others.

Special education

Judging from his behavior, Tyrone's teacher knew that there was something wrong with him. She then advised Tyrone's parents to send their son to a school specially designed to address the needs of children with developmental problems.

They were then referred by one of their neighbors to the Vivetri Foundation's Helping Hands School for Special Children in Pila, Laguna. The foundation is a nonstock, nonprofit organization that caters to the needs of Filipino "special" children. Founded in 1981, the foundation uses a multimodal approach in teaching that includes an appropriate educational program, behavior modification, parent, child and teacher education, counseling and appropriate medication.

At first, Tyrone's parents were reluctant to send him to the foundation. They could not accept the fact that their youngest son would be separated from normal students. But after an encouraging discussion with Dr. Paulino Domingo, the prime mover behind the foundation, they were convinced that the foundation could properly fill in their son's educational and emotional needs.

Many other parents of AD/MD children feel uncomfortable when they hear that their child may need special education services. This is because they mistakenly conclude that special education is only for children with mental retardation or severe disabilities. However, Dr. Domingo explained that "special education simply means educational programming designed specifically for the individual."

In reality, all children need to get special education. However, this is impractical because majority of children do well within the standard education program. Thus, special education is reserved for children with unique education needs, such as children with learning disabilities, special medical needs like AD/MD, as well as those who are mentally gifted.

"Education is the first strategy for AD/MD intervention. We can assure you that we'll try to put your son back on track," Dr. Domingo assured Tyrone's parents.

Now living normally

In its 21 years of existence, the Vivetri Foundation has helped children with AD/MD disorder and other learning and mental disabilities. There are former students who are now living normally and able to have families of their own. One of them is Rosalinda Alarba.

When she entered the foundation, Rosalinda was diagnosed as having mild to moderate mental retardation. She was trained by the foundation in all aspects of clerical and household work. After 10 years in the foundation, Rosalinda has significantly improved and she now works in a company in Manila. Currently, she is happily married and blessed with a son.

Said Rosalinda: "I would always be grateful to the Vivetri Foundation for all the help that they had given me. For poor people like me, this foundation is truly a gift from heaven."

Selfless work of love

Unlike Tyrone, a majority of the students enrolled in the foundation come from poor families. Luckily, the foundation manages to help indigent special children from Laguna and nearby provinces mainly through the philanthropic works of Dr. Domingo and his staff—truly a selfless work of love.

Since the foundation has few sponsors, Dr. Domingo has to use his own funds to defray all the educational needs of the children. The foundation even provides daily food to all the enrolled indigent children.

Even Tyrone's parents are amazed at how Dr. Domingo runs his foundation. Moved by the accomplishments of the foundation, they decided to donate an ample amount for the benefit of other indigent special children of Vivetri. They know that these children will have a great chance of being treated because the foundation understands their needs.

Lack of funds

The Vivetri Foundation has enabled a lot of AD/MD and mentally retarded children live lives, which are close to normal as possible. Coming from indigent families and living in squatter areas, many of these children would have been abandoned street children, probably sniffing rugby in some street corner. Operating on a shoestring budget and almost at the verge of closure many times because of lack of funds, Vivetri has survived and continues to mold the minds of many "special" children—an amazing testament of how God works in subtle ways to sustain the good deeds of His people.

(For more information on the Vivetri Foundation and how you can be a partner in assisting indigent "special" children, please call up Estelita Samson at (0919) 6624955 or,(046) 4714859).

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SATURDAY*Special*

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Jedi master Lucas ponders life after 'Star Wars'

SAN RAFAEL, California—With five down, one to go on his "Star Wars" chronicle, George Lucas is thinking ahead to his second career. The one without the billion-dollar action-figure sales. The one without lines of moviegoers camped out six weeks before his movies open.

LUCAS. Has nothing more to prove.

Sixth chapter

After he finishes the sixth chapter, "Episode III," in 2005, Lucas plans to turn back and travel the road not taken 30 years ago, when he chose to make the breezy, populist comedy "American Graffiti" after debuting with the gloomy future vision of "THX 1138."

While he may team again with Steven Spielberg and Harrison Ford on a fourth "Indiana Jones" film, Lucas plans to choose his own directing projects from a couple of dozen story ideas accumulated over the last three decades, projects that "will not be commercial films," he said in an interview at Skywalker Ranch, the 2,600-(1,000-hectare) home base for Lucasfilm and his moviemaking empire.

That means no Episodes 7-9. No reunion of original stars Ford, Mark Hamill and Carrie Fisher. No further adventures of Luke, Han and Leia, which Lucas had idly pondered in an interview 25 years ago, when he was pressed about his plans if and when he completed the three prequels to the original "Star Wars" trilogy.

Amusing

"I said, 'Well, I guess it would be amusing to come back when Harrison and Mark and Carrie are 70 years old and make another one,' which I meant as a joke. It's an amusing concept more than it is anything else, except that I'll be 70 years old, too," said Lucas, who turned 58 two days before "Star Wars: Episode II—Attack of the Clones" opened.

"And I don't have a story for it," said Lucas, who developed the broad plot for Episodes I-VI before he made the first film and says he's now just filling in the blanks. "To just go out and do one for the sake of doing one, I have no interest in. It's not important to me. I don't need the money, and I don't need the success."

With worldwide grosses pushing $3 billion for the first four "Star Wars" movies, and the final two installments expected to join their predecessors in the box-office pantheon, Lucas has nothing more to prove.

Besides his own film successes, Lucas companies such as Industrial Light & Magic and Skywalker Sound have hurtled forward the art of visual effects and audio on dozens of movies. His THX system has helped define sound quality in theaters and on home video.

Even his castoffs have been golden. A computer-animation unit he founded and later sold grew into Pixar, maker of the "Toy Story" movies, "Monsters, Inc." and "A Bug's Life."

Bonanza

And while insisting he never foresaw the merchandising and sequel bonanza of his creation, Lucas is credited with Yoda-like prescience for retaining ownership of the "Star Wars" franchise rather than selling the property outright to distributor 20th Century Fox in the mid-1970s.

In terms of great business deals, "the selling of Manhattan island for $21 or whatever is probably ahead of it, but this is probably right after," said Rick McCallum, producer of the current "Star Wars" trilogy. "But it wasn't a business decision. It was a way to promote the film."

Lucas said he held on to merchandising rights so he could run off some posters and T-shirts to advertise the film, because he worried the studio might not market it adequately.

At the time, toys and other licensed products were geared more toward television series, not feature films. "Star Wars" started today's era of merchandising tie-ins, which can be more lucrative than the films themselves.

"They made me out to be some kind of genius, but I'm not," Lucas said. "I just basically was trying to protect my little movie, and as it turned out, it was a very wise thing to do."

It's left Lucas in a unique position where the studio works for him, with Fox distributing the "Star Wars" films for a fee, while most of the proceeds go to Lucasfilm.

Combination

The Fox-Lucasfilm combination does provide perhaps the most thrilling pause in all of cinema, the moment after the studio's rousing fanfare fades and before John Williams' score sweeps in.

"We're happy to just continue to see our logo come up and our fanfare heard, followed by the Lucasfilm logo, then the initial burst of music," said Jim Gianopulos, Fox studio co-chairman. "The reality is, we do very, very well, as does Lucasfilm, in having both the profitability of 'Star Wars' and the importance and prestige of being the distributor. It's an honor and privilege to be there."

Raised in northern California, Lucas attended junior college in the mid-1960s before transferring to the University of Southern

JEDI/ p. C3

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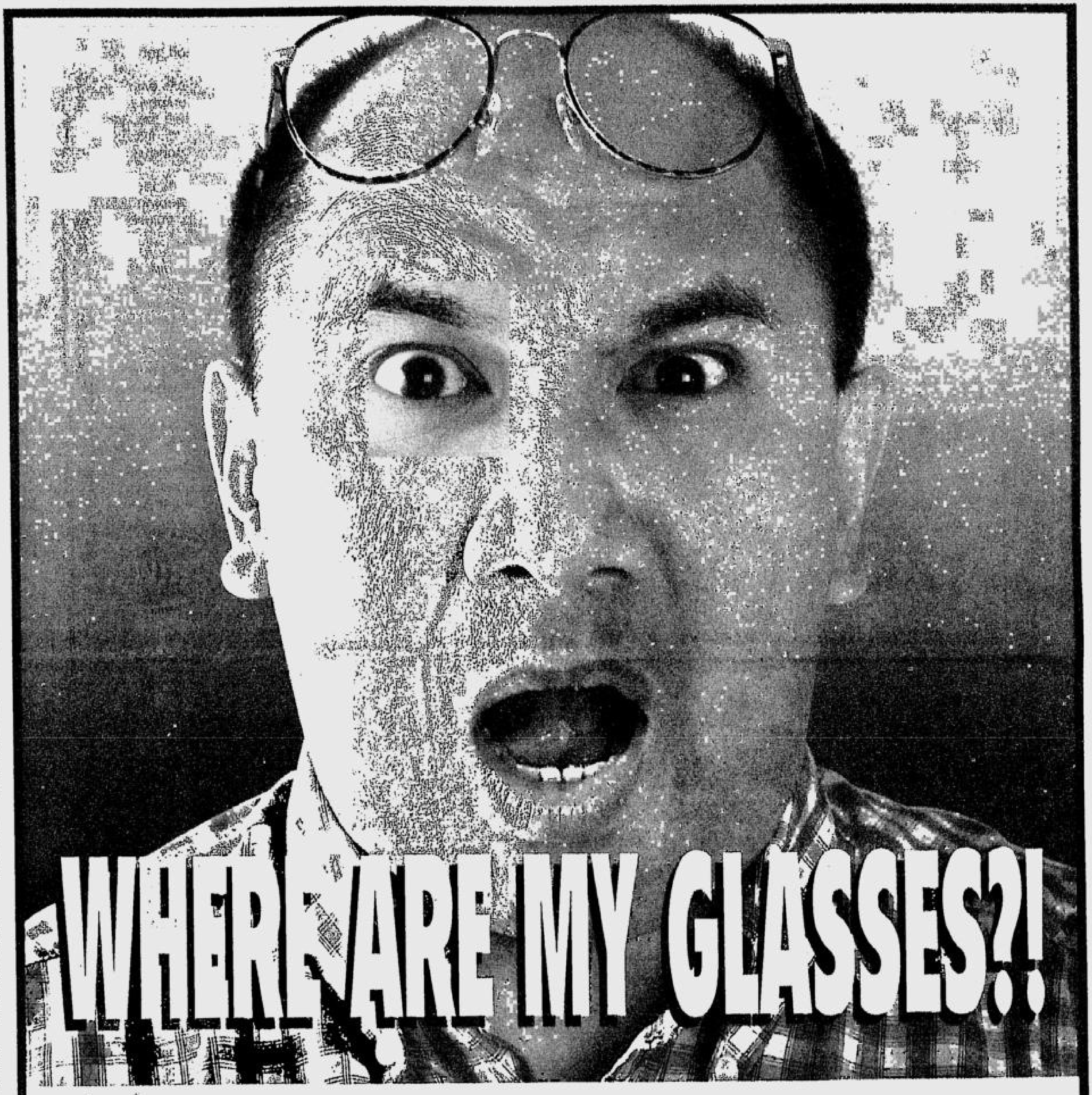
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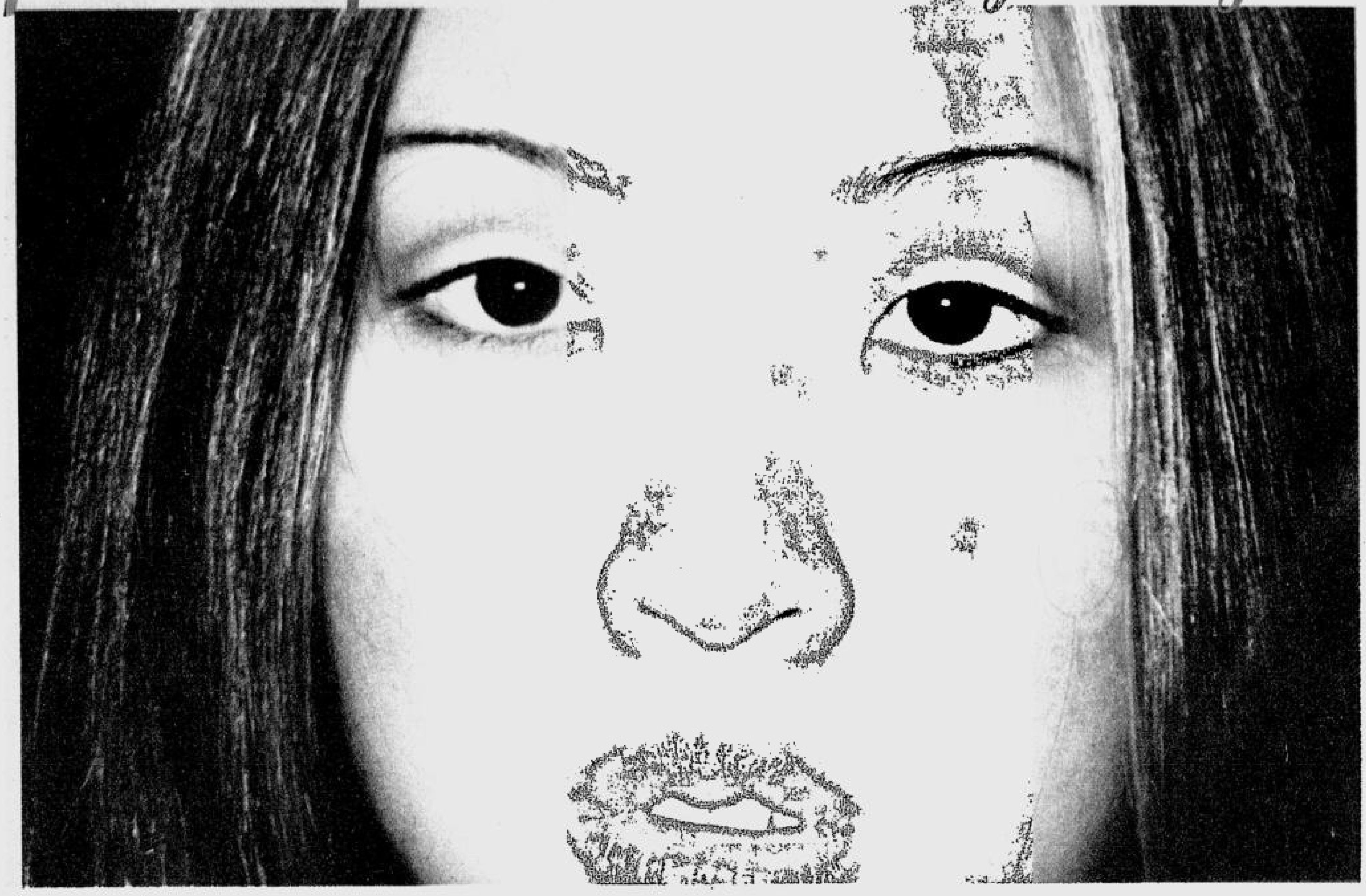


Maria Antonia Lourdes Ticzon Martel

Maria Antonia Lourdes Ticzon Martel will be celebrating **her 18th birthday** tonight **6:30 PM** at the **Rizal Ballroom Makati Shangri-La Hotel** Makati City. She is the only child of **Antonio V. Martel, Jr.** and **Belen Lovina Ticzon-Martel**. She was born in **New York City, USA 7:08 PM, Monday, May 7, 1984.**

She is **a Grade 12 student of International School Manila**. She will be graduating from High School on June 6, 2002 and she is planning to take up B.S. Legal Management at the Ateneo de Manila University or Graphic Design at Fordham University in New York City, USA which awarded her a $5000/year Scholarship. She received recently the Dr. Theodore K. Steele Scholarship in the amount of $8000/year awarded to academically talented entering freshmen by the New York Institute of Technology for a major in Architecture and the C.W. Post Recognition Award with a $4000/year Scholarship from C.W. Post Campus Long Island University, New York for a major in Graphic Design.

Maria Antonia Lourdes is **a member of the Talented and Gifted of the Philippines Foundation Inc.** having been **identified as a gifted child** when she was barely **2 1/2 years old** through a series of evaluative tests to measure her **mental capacity (assessed to be Superior)**, reading levels, creative thinking ability, self-concept and personality profile.

Badgley Mischka

A Brief Profile of Designers Mark Badgley and James Mischka

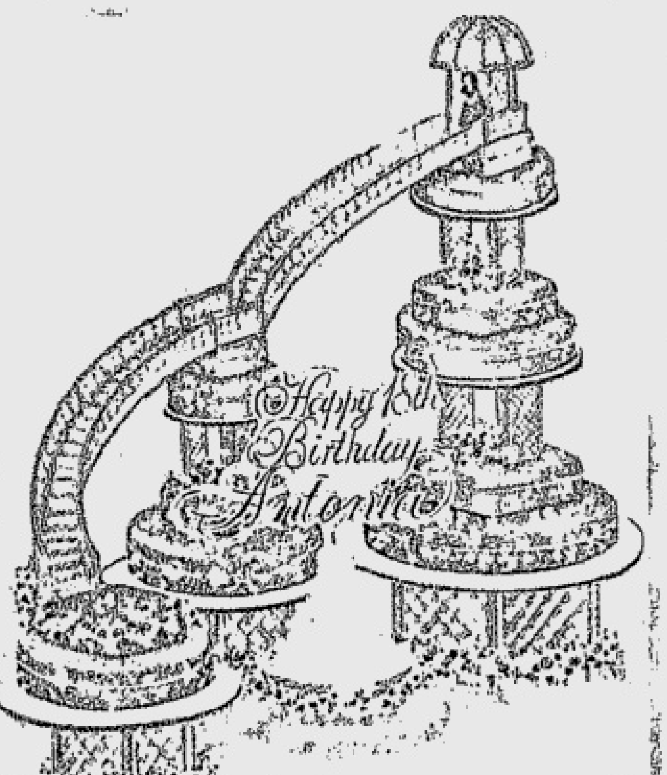
Mark Badgley and James Mischka are a rare breed in a tumultuous fashion industry. Hailed by **Vogue** as among the "Top 10 American Designers" and the darlings of the young Hollywood set, they have made their mark with the most glamorous, stylish and wearable evening wear to come along in years. They have captivated the fashion press and prominent retailers and their timeless designs appeal to a range of women, including celebrities Jennifer Lopez, Ashley Judd, Catherine Zeta Jones, Elizabeth Hurley, Winona Ryder and Cameron Diaz.

The Badgley Mischka signature style is simple, streamlined and thoroughly elegant, constructed of the finest fabrics with superior craftsmanship.

Graduates of Parsons School of Designs in New York, both designers spent time designing for leading names—Badgley for Donna Karan, Mischka for WilliWear WilliSmith—before starting their own life. Badgley Mischka has the solid financial support of Escada, the German fashion powerhouse which enabled them to build a global business.

Their designs appear on the covers of Vogue and Women's Wear Daily and are worn by famous people in the Academy Awards and the Emmy.

Badgley Mischka is sold in the most prominent stores in the world including Bergdorf Goodman, Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue.



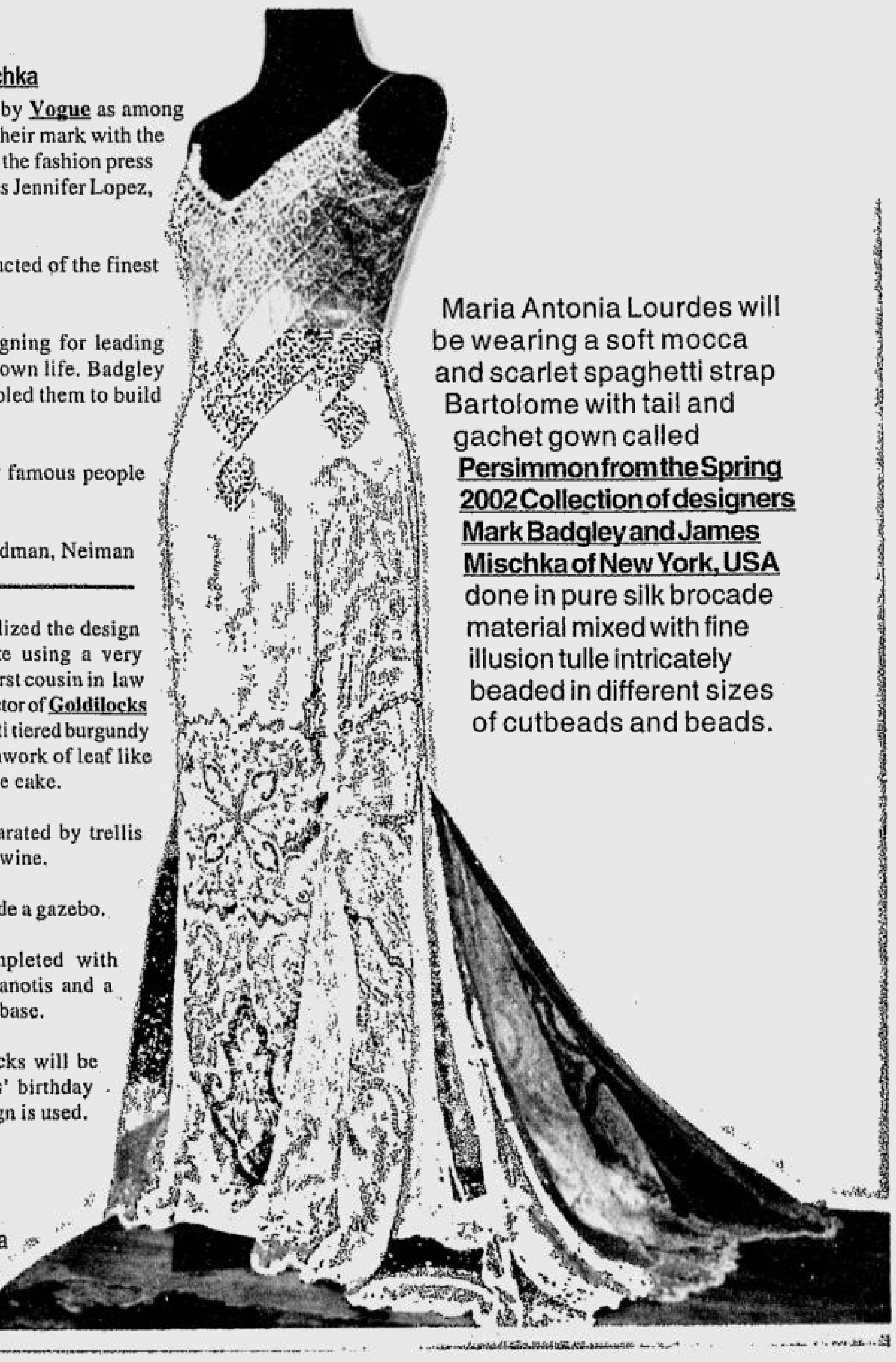
Maria Antonia Lourdes conceptualized the design of her choco butter birthday cake using a very special recipe with the help of her first cousin in law Franklin Go, Sales & Operation Director of **Goldilocks Bakeshop Incorporated**. It is a multi tiered burgundy and cream fondant cake with patchwork of leaf like embroidered design all around the cake.

Every 2 layers of the cake is separated by trellis where mini roses and grapes intertwine.

On top is a **Lladro Debutante** inside a gazebo.

The overall masterpiece is completed with gumpaste roses, rose buds, stephanotis and a marblelized water fountain on the base.

This is the 18th year that Goldilocks will be supplying Maria Antonia Lourdes' birthday cakes and each year a special design is used.



Maria Antonia Lourdes will be wearing a soft mocca and scarlet spaghetti strap Bartolome with tail and gachet gown called **Persimmon from the Spring 2002 Collection of designers Mark Badgley and James Mischka of New York, USA** done in pure silk brocade material mixed with fine illusion tulle intricately beaded in different sizes of cutbeads and beads.

Special guests from the Performing Arts had been invited to entertain Maria Antonia Lourdes' guests tonight. Music will be provided by **Maestro Ruggero Barbieri and 60 member Philippipne Philharmonic Orchestra.** The **Rizal Ballrooms's decoration** is by Maria Antonia Lourdes, **executed by The Flower Farm.**

ADVT.

Jedi master Lucas ponders life after 'Star Wars'

From p. C1

California to study film. The 1970 tale of totalitarianism "THX 1138," starring Robert Duvall and Donald Pleasence, evolved from one of Lucas' short student films.

His friend, Francis Ford Coppola, was executive producer. Lucas says it was Coppola who urged him to try his hand at youthful comedy, "not this esoteric stuff you do."

"American Graffiti," loosely inspired by his own teen years, brought Lucas critical and commercial success and opened the door for "Star Wars."

Lucas has returned to directing the current trilogy after turning those chores over to others on "The Empire Strikes Back" and "Return of the Jedi," a period when he was building his companies and raising a family.

Bombs

Other than "Star Wars" and "Indiana Jones," Lucas has had only scattered success with film projects over the last 25 years (his writing or producing credits include such bombs as "More American Graffiti" and "Howard the Duck").

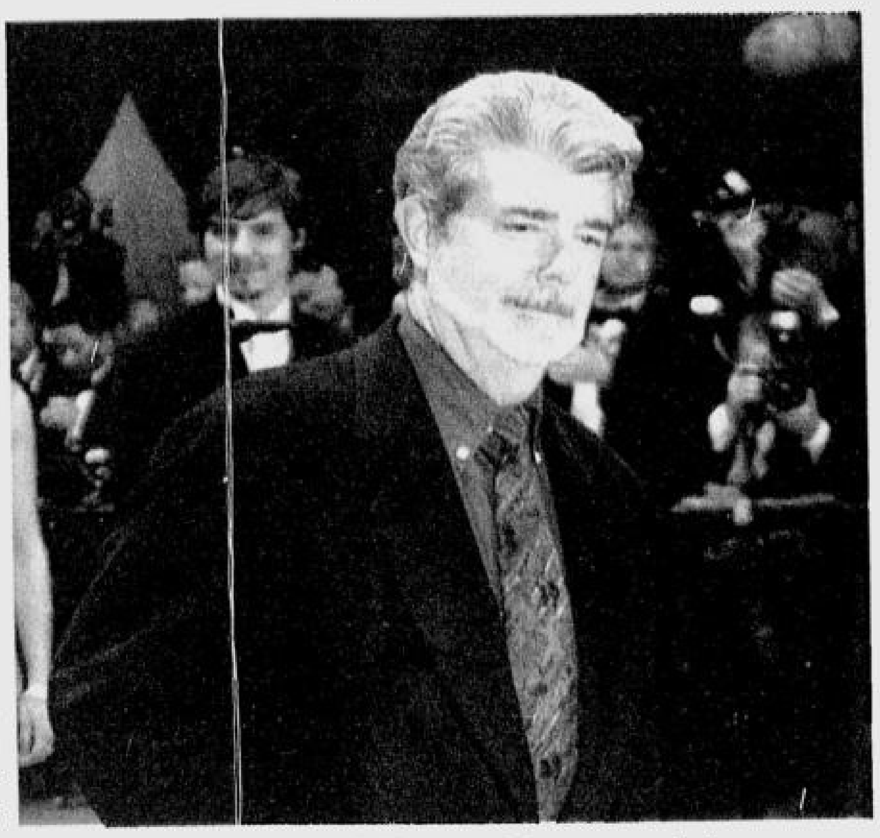
Even the "Star Wars" movies fail to please many critics and prompt endless second-guessing by hard-core fans. Though it grossed $922 million worldwide, "Episode I—The Phantom Menace" disappointed devotees who waited 16 years for a new "Star Wars" movie.

Fans hated the buffoonish Jar Jar Binks, who has a much smaller role in "Episode II." And Lucas said he had anticipated that audiences would be unhappy that "Phantom Menace" begins the story of Anakin Skywalker—the future Darth Vader—in boyhood.

It made "Episode I" even more of a kiddie flick than its predecessors, and the film was bogged down by dull political maneuvering.

All of that material—including Anakin's boyhood adventures—were necessary in context of the overall saga, Lucas said.

"I worked very hard to make each one stand alone, work on its own," Lucas said. "But if you see all six movies as one movie and you start in the beginning and go all the way to the end, it makes a nice novel. It actually has a really nice arc."



LUCAS. For all their dazzle, his films owe their success to their mythological roots.

Lucas insists he made no concessions in "Episode II" based on fan criticism of "The Phantom Menace," including Jar Jar's reduced screen time.

Fan base

"I don't think George is making any sort of concerted effort to make these films for a fan base," said Hayden Christensen, who joins the cast as the now grown-up Jedi apprentice Anakin. "He's trying to tell a story that he had envisioned back in the '70s."

Following in scholar Joseph Campbell's wake, Lucas rooted the "Star Wars" epic in comparative mythology, searching for motifs that transcended nationality and appeared in Greek, Middle Eastern, American Indian and other folklores.

Lucas swirled notions of ancient fears, desires, values and family conflict into the action-adventure mode of 1930s Saturday matinees. He began by trying to write the redemptive journey of Luke Skywalker and his fallen father, Anakin, as a single film, but the story grew so much that he settled on a trilogy in the vein of old movie serials.

The tale of Anakin Skywalker's conversion into the evil Darth Vader was sketched as a back story for the original "Star Wars" movies. Since he was never certain he would make the prequels, Lucas said he let his imagination run wild, with far more elaborate creatures and settings.

By the mid-1990s, computer imagery had advanced to the point where Lucas felt he could capture the scope of the prequels as he visualized them in his head. To mark the 20th anniversary of "Star Wars," Lucas also tweaked the first three films for theatrical reissues, digitally adding new scenes and images.

Universality of myths

For all their dazzle, the films owe their success to their mythological roots, Lucas said. Filmmakers in the 1970s had turned to gritty street films and thrillers heavy on Freudian concepts of the individual, while Lucas aimed for the universality of myths, "which are basically Jungian," he said.

"In terms of my little experiment, my little anthropological experiment, it worked like crazy. I am completely convinced that the whole success was based on that little experiment, not on all the style things that everyone focuses on . . .

"I put it in an action-adventure premise, but as people have learned since then, if you just do the action adventure, you just do the special effects, you get your money up there and you can make a giant hit movie. But in the end, it doesn't do what 'Star Wars' did.

"It has much more meaning to people's lives. Some of those movies they forget after six months or a year. But 'Star Wars' seems to be very enduring because there is more to it than spaceships."

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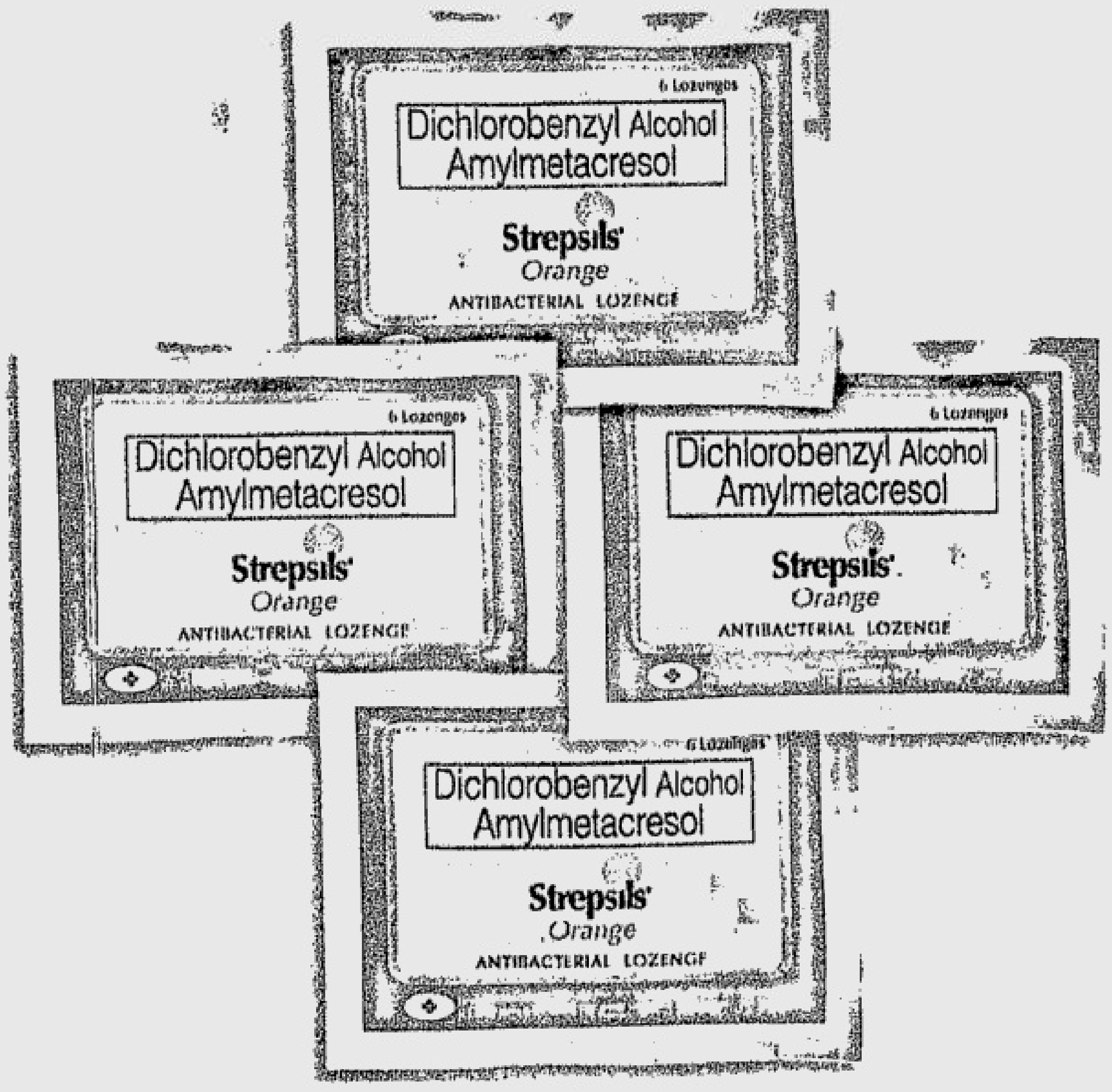

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Sharon, Aga and other stars as product endorsers

By Nestor U. Torre

SHOW biz stars have always enjoyed a side-career as product endorsers that brings in a tidy income each year. But that sideline has never been as profitable as it is now, with some super-celebrities charging millions and even mega-millions of pesos to endorse everything from canned sardines to chic fashions made affordable for the middle-class market.

Profitable

A celebrity-friend of ours recently revealed to us just how profitable the endorsement field has become: Once, she said, the advertising agency of a new product approached her management, urging her to agree to endorse it. Since she felt that the product would be wrong for her classy image, she turned it down.

But the agency was instructed by the manufacrurer to offer the stellar talent whatever it would take to secure her prized assent. The price just kept going up—and up—until the offer just became too ridiculously tempting to be sniffily pooh-poohed away. The star finally agreed to endorse the product for so much money that she was able to buy a house with her income from her "sideline"!

Sidelines

Imagine, therefore, what popular endorsers like Sharon Cuneta and Aga Muhlach are making from *their* sidelines. They charge the steepest endorsement fees in the biz (save for FPJ and his beer institutionals, of course), and yet prospective advertisers keep lining up for their services.

The reason is simple: products endorsed by these two stellar pluggers yield additional sales figures that are huge enough to rationalize the mega-millions that their endorsements cost the companies involved.

What makes the likes of Sharon and Aga the "convincing" product endorsers that they have turned out to be? Why are they hounded by advertisers, while other stars have to make-do with itty-bitty T-shirt or underwear plugs, or are left in the lurch altogether?

Popular

First, they're big stars, which means that they're popular, which further means that their word counts for something with the general buying public.

CUNETA AND MUHLACH. Credible personalities.

Next, they're credible endorsers, because their public and private lives are generally beyond reproach, which makes them naturals as endorsers of "family" and "child" products.

"Sexy" and " macho" stars also get to endorse products, but they tend to be of a more limited range and geared to specialized markets. Consequently, the fees they pay also tend to be smaller.

So, it you're a prospective star who's casting a moist, sidelong glance at product endorsements, cultivate a "For General Patronage" image and lifestyle!

Competing brand

A third factor is the stipulation that the star endorser isn't associated with a competing brand for a similar product. So, if the celebrity is already endorsing a brand of toothpaste, that's it for him or her in the dental-care category.

That's why in-demand endorsers don't say yes to any offer; they wait for the biggest manufacturer of a given product to make his bid, which is usually heftier than the compensation package that the less-affluent competition can come up with.

Fourth, popular endorsers choose products whose advertising campaigns and tie-ups can in turn boost the stars' entertainment careers.

Cycle

Thus, the cycle is cleverly completed: Stars are chosen to endorse products because they're popular, but if they play their cards right, some of the products they endorse can make them more popular as entertainers as well—especially if their commercials turn out to be "hits" that people keep talking about.

All that, and mega-millions, too! No wonder, less favored stars wish they could be top-of-the-line celebrity product-endorsers, as well.

And they're really starting them young these days, aren't they? Sharon's baby is only 16 months old, and yet she's already appeared in her first product-endorsement commercial with her mega-popular mom.

Cute baby

By the way, you don't have to be well-known to earn a lot as a child talent in commercials. A friend of ours had a cute baby who was cast as the lead talent in a promo campaign and got paid P100,000 before the tot was even a year old!

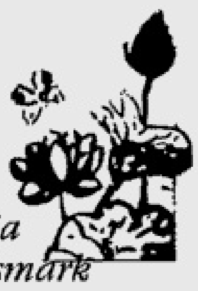
Of course, Sharon's own pride and joy wouldn't settle for that relatively modest amount, but it was certainly big enough for a toothless tyke who still couldn't go potty by himself!

The case of Sharon and her baby shows that you can be a celebrity only by association, and still make it as a product endorser. And what about Sharon and her *yaya*? That's stretching the "by association" link a bit, but it also works.

Sharon and her mechanic? Aga and his dentist? The possibilities are mind-boggling! The line forms to the right . . .

Wise words from a saintly warrior

LOTUS POND



R. Valencia and S. Bismark

THOUSAND of years ago, there was a saintly warrior by the name of Bhisma. He was an exalted person who was respected not only by his soldiers and friends but also by his enemies.

He was so wise and great that even though he was lying down wounded on a bed of arrows in the middle of a battlefield, he spoke great truths about life and its purpose. All the generals and leaders from opposite camps stood around to hear him speak about the Absolute Truth.

Today, I would like to share with you some of the truths spoken by this noble personality, in the hope that we can all learn and benefit from the gift that he imparted before he left his material body:

"No one can claim to be proprietor of anything in the world. Therefore, one must give in charity for the service of the Lord. Everyone's energy is generated or borrowed from the reservoir of energy of the Lord; therefore, the resultant actions of such energy must be given to the Lord in the shape of transcendental loving service for Him.

"As the rivers draw water from the sea through the clouds and again go down to the sea, similarly our energy is borrowed from the supreme source, the Lord's energy, and it must return to the Lord. That is the perfection of our energy.

"As far as salvation is concerned, one has the principles of lust, anger, unlawful desires, avarice and bewilderment. To get freedom from anger, one should learn how to forgive. To be free from unlawful desires, one should not make plans. By spiritual culture, one is able to conquer sleep. By tolerance only can one conquer desires and avarice.

"Disturbances from various diseases can be avoided by regulated diets. By self-control, one can be free from false hopes, and money can be saved by avoiding undesirable associations. By practice of yoga, one can control hunger, and worldliness can be avoided by culturing the knowledge of impermanence.

"Dizziness can be conquered by rising up, and false arguments can be conquered by factual ascertainment. Talkativeness can be avoided by gravity and silence, and by prowess one can avoid fearfulness. Perfect knowledge can be obtained by self-cultivation. One must be free from lust, avarice, anger, dreaming, etc., to actually attain the path of salvation.

"As far as women are concerned, they are accepted as a power of inspiration for men. Such powerful women are controlled by shyness. Therfore, shyness is important for women. Once this control valve is loosened, women can create havoc in society by adultery. Adultery means production of unwanted children who disturb the world.

"As far as pleasing the Lord, we are all His eternal servants of the Lord. The simple process of pleasing Him (for householders especially) is to worship the Lord at home. By concentrating on the Lord, one may progressively go on with the daily routine of work.

"Worshipping the Lord at home, serving the saintly persons, hearing scriptures, residing in a holy place and chanting the holy name of the Lord are all inexpensive ways by which one can please the Lord."

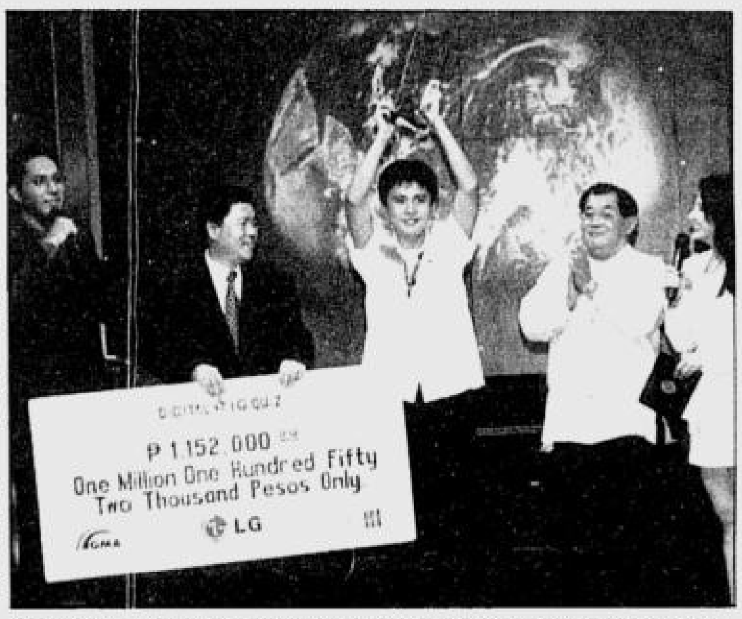
'Digital LG Quiz Show' receives Anak TV Seal

WITH all the TV game shows these days, who says the high school quiz shows hardly get noticed? After winning the 2001 Star Awards' Best Game Show and Best Game Show Hosts categories, GMA 7's "Digital LG Quiz Show" has racked up another achievement. It recently received the prestigious Anak TV Seal issued by the Southeast Asian Foundation for Children's Television (SEAFCTC) during awarding ceremonies held aboard WG&A Superferry 14.

The Anak TV Seal is bestowed on TV programs judged worthy of support by Filipino families and of patronage by the education, business and religious sectors.

Selection process

To receive the seal, the "Digital LG Quiz Show" passed through a rigorous selection process involving three levels of screening by almost a thousand jurors composed of educators, parent leaders, government, NGO and religious leaders, business executives, media professionals, ordinary men-in-the-street and selected children.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"DIGITAL LG Quiz Show" was cited as the "People's Choice for Family-Friendly TV Programs."

Acknowledged as the "People's Choice for Family-Friendly TV Programs," the SEAFCTV seal started a year ago in response to requests by Filipino parents and teachers to provide a listing of programs they could encourage kids and students to watch.

In fact, seven other GMA 7 programs also received the seal: "Sesame Street," "Blue's Clues," "5 & Up," "Chikiting Patrol," "Koko Kwak," "Batang Batibot" and "Teletubbies."

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM MAY 25 - MAY 31

CH	2	4	5	7	9	13	23	29	31
	5:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7:00 Arriba, Arriba 8:00 Mary d' Potter 9:00 Klasmeyts 10:00 Kakasa Ka Ba? 10:30 Sapul Kayo Dyan 11:00 "F" 11:30 Sports Unlimited	3:00 Value Vision 6:00 MBA 11:00 Business and Leisure	6:30 Wing Commander 7:00 Sailormoon Sailor Stars 7:30 Wheel of Fortune 8:00 Celebrity Family Feud 8:30 Wow Mali! 9:30 Saturday Night *Mesmerized*	5:30 Hunter X Hunter 6:00 Imbestigador 7:00 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:00 Kakabakaba 9:00 Pinoy Blockbuster 11:00 Master Showman	6:00 Entertainment Tonite 6:30 Hot Ticket 7:00 Largo 8:00 7 Days 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse	8:00 Star For A Night 9:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 10:00 Viva Box Office 11:00 IBC Eborde	6:00 Travel Time 6:30 Digital Tour 7:00 Explorer 7:30 Early Edition 8:30 Gilmore Girls 9:30 Studio 23 Presents	7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras Ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Live 7:00 Extreme Close Up 7:30 Nearly Famous 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Celebrity Profile *Rachel Hunter*
	5:30 Sharon 7:00 Wansapanataym 8:30 Home Along Da Riles 9:30 Sunday Family Cinema 11:30 Off The Record 12:00 The Weekend News	6:00 Fox News 9:00 NBA 11:30 Unlimited Diving	6:00 Zorro 6:30 Guyferd 7:00 Price Is Right 8:00 Sing-Galing 9:00 The Big Night *The Specialist* 11:00 Fashion TV	5:30 Partners Mel & Jay 7:00 KI 8:00 Daddy Di Do Du 9:00 Sunday Night Box Office 11:00 Che-Che Lazaro Presents	6:00 Entertainment This Weekend 7:00 Ripley's Believe It or Not 8:00 Match TV 9:00 Sunday's Big Event *Miss USA* 11:00 Sunday Report 11:30 Ugnayan	4:00 PBA Game 1 6:00 PBA Game 2 8:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Sinemaks	6:00 Rugrats 6:30 Starship Troopers 7:00 Batman Beyond 7:30 Futurama 8:00 Grosse Pointe 8:30 Veronica's Closet 9:00 Will & Grace 9:30 Temptation Island 10:30 Twilight Zone	7:00 Sunday Mini-Series 8:00 Oh Tokyo 9:00 Sunday Night movies	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 E! Summer Escape 8:00 Rank Sexiest Women In Entertainmnet 9:00 Revealed w/ Jules Asner *Ann Heche* 10:00 Movies on E! *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*
	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Game K N B? 7:30 Pangako sa 'Yo 8:00 Sa Puso ko, Ilingatan Ka 8:30 Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan 9:00 FPJ Action Cinema 10:30 Headlines 11:00 The Correpondents	4:00 2002 PBL Chairman's Cup 5:00 Fox News 8:00 TeleDyaryo 10:00 2002 PBL Chairman's Cup	6:00 Balitang-Balita! 6:30 F 7:00 Mahha Go Go Go 7:30 Wheel of Fortune 8:00 Family Feud 8:30 Poltergeist: The Legacy 9:30 Trabaho Lang 10:00 The Big News	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Marimar 7:00 Monica Brava 7:30 Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga 8:00 Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin 8:30 Kung Mawawala Ka 9:00 GMA's Best 10:30 Front Page 11:00 I-Witness	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Sin Ti 6:30 Real TV 7:00 World's Most Amazing Videos 8:00 Jag 9:00 Sons of Thunder 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Entertainment tonight 11:00 Sex & The City	6:00 Viva's Hot Hits! 8:00 Crayon Shin Chan 8:30 Kurochan 9:00 The Weakest Link 10:00 Carita de Angel 10:30 Por Un Beso 11:00 News	5:30 Beat UK 6:30 Jenny Jones 7:30 Hidden Camera 8:00 Dark Angel 9:00 Charmed 9:00 FPJ Action Cinema 10:00 News Central 10:30 Points of View	6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Live 7:00 Celebrity Adventures 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 9:00 E! News Live 9:30 Talk Soup 10:00 Best of Late Show 11:00 Wild On *D.C*
	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Game K N B? 7:30 Pangako sa 'Yo 8:00 Sa Puso ko, Ilingatan Ka 8:30 Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan 9:00 OK Fine! Whatever 9:30 Attagirl 10:30 Headlines 11:00 Pipol	4:00 Value Vision 5:00 Fox News 8:00 TeleDyaryo 10:00 Pulsong Masa 10:30 Auto Focus	6:00 Balitang-Balita! 6:30 Dragon League 7:00 2 Years Vacation w/ Dinosaurs 7:30 Wheel of Fortune 8:00 Family Feud 8:30 E.R. 9:30 Urban Doktor 10:00 The Big News	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Marimar 7:00 Monica Brava 7:30 Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga 8:00 Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin 8:30 Kung Mawawala Ka 9:00 Kool Ka Lang 10:30 Front Page 11:00 Probe Team	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Sin Ti 6:30 Real TV 7:00 Ed 8:00 Ally McBeal 9:00 The Practice 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Entertainment tonight 11:00 NBI Files	6:00 PBA Games 8:00 PBA Games 10:00 The Weakest Link 11:00 News	5:30 Beat UK 6:30 Jenny Jones 7:30 Popular 8:30 Angel 9:00 Just Shoot Me 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah	6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Live 7:00 Extreme Close Up 7:30 Mysteries & Scandals 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 9:00 E! News Live 9:30 Talk Soup 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Wild On *Resorts 2002*
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	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Game K N B? 7:30 Pangako sa 'Yo 8:00 Sa Puso ko, Ilingatan Ka 8:30 Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan 9:00 Star Cinema Presents 10:30 Headlines 11:00 True Crimes	4:00 2002 PBL Chairman's Cup 6:00 Paco Park Presents 7:00 Fox News 8:00 TeleDyaryo 10:00 2002 PBL Chairman's Cup	6:00 Balitang-Balita! 6:30 Lazer Patrol 7:00 Starcom 7:30 Wheel of Fortune 8:00 Family Feud 8:30 Ispup 9:30 On-air 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Friday Box Office	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Marimar 7:00 Monica Brava 7:30 Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga 8:00 Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin 8:30 Kung Mawawala Ka 9:00 Bubble Gang 10:30 Front Page 11:00 Emergency	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Sin Ti 6:30 Real TV 7:00 That's Life 8:00 Malcolm In The Middle 8:30 Dharma & Greg 9:00 NYPD Blue 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 TV Greats On Friday	8:00 Crayon Shin Chan 8:30 Kurochan 9:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire 10:00 Carita de Angel 10:30 Por Un Beso 11:00 News	5:30 Halo-Halo 6:30 Jenny Jones 7:30 Exposed 8:30 Survivor 9:00 Oh Grow Up! 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah	6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Live 7:00 Behind The Scenes 7:30 Mysteries & Scandals 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 9:00 E! News Live 9:30 Talk Soup 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Wild On *Spanish Riviera*

ALBUM REVIEWS

Travails of young love

By Mary Ann A. Bautista

'The Big Room'
M2M
Warner Music

YOUNG, adventurous and sweet, M2M sing about girl power, relationships, having everything and the travails of being a teenager. Marit and Marion can harmonize and successfully mix pop with funky beats.

"Sometimes" is a standout. The melody is catchy and you can't get it out of your head after you hear it. Gen(eration)-Yers can easily relate to it and just might make it their anthem or theme song.

"Leave Me Alone" warns a guy not to get too close because these girls have other priorities. Nope, they won't sulk or mope if guys ignore or take them for granted. They are in full control of their lives! That's girl power for you.

"Love Left For Me" sums up the lame excuses guys come up with when they're caught red-handed. Don't listen to this song if you love being a doormat girlfriend because it might remind you to wise up.

"Payphone" tells girls not to be martyrs. It's like eavesdropping in on two girls having serious a girl talk about letting a no-good boyfriend go.

"Eventually" is about innocence and losing it, about growing up after falling in love. A song that tells you how it really feels to be loved and to love.

"Don't" has a good melody but bland lyrics. It's the usual "please don't hurt me" kind of song.

You'll like this album if you're not expecting serious and perfect lyrics, but the normal stuff that teens go through. Harmonizing is not a problem and they can sing without being nasal.

Self-titled
Mariella
Alpha/Harmony Records

Welcome to a pop train. This album has adolescence and the pains of heartbreak written all over it. Mariella's vocal style is easy on the ears.

"Laging Ikaw Pa Rin" and "Hanap Kita" are songs for martyrs. It totally negates everything about empowering yourself and being your own person. In a weird sort of way, it even encourages you to suffer!

Lyrics like *"Bakit ba iniwanan mo? Nang ika'y nagpaalam ay kay sakit sa puso ko. Maghihintay para lang sa 'yo. Dahil para sa akin, ikaw ang lahat sa buhay ko"* make girls sound like stupid fools.

Sure, girls usually have a tendency to be blind when they fall in love but there's got to be a limit to the stuff they can tolerate!

"Kakaba-kaba" is a good track. Mariella has done her homework when it comes to cracking the teen market. She knows the importance of *"kilig* factor."

"Kailan Ba" and "Ikaw Lang" smack of romantic mush and sentiment. These songs detail why we love the feeling of being with the one we love because we need a body to snuggle up to for warmth and comfort, and somebody to talk to.

"Ikaw at Ikaw Na Lang" has a sweet and delicate flavor. The song has a light bubblegum feel to it, even if the lyrics are *pang-masa.*

"Madama Mo Sana" and "Langit ang Pag-ibig Mo" showcase Mariella's vocal prowess. They show that she's in command when doing sentimental songs.

The album can suit the *masa* crowd nicely. Some tracks have commercial schmoozing on them to entice the masses to grab the album.

M2M. Musical girl power.

MARIELLA. Has done her homework.

Playmate Smith awarded $88M

By Dan Whitcomb

LOS ANGELES-A federal judge recently ruled that dying 89-year-old billionaire J. Howard Marshall truly loved his 26-year-old Playboy Playmate wife, Anna Nicole Smith, and awarded her $88 million in a bitter court fight with the oil tycoon's son.

Soap opera

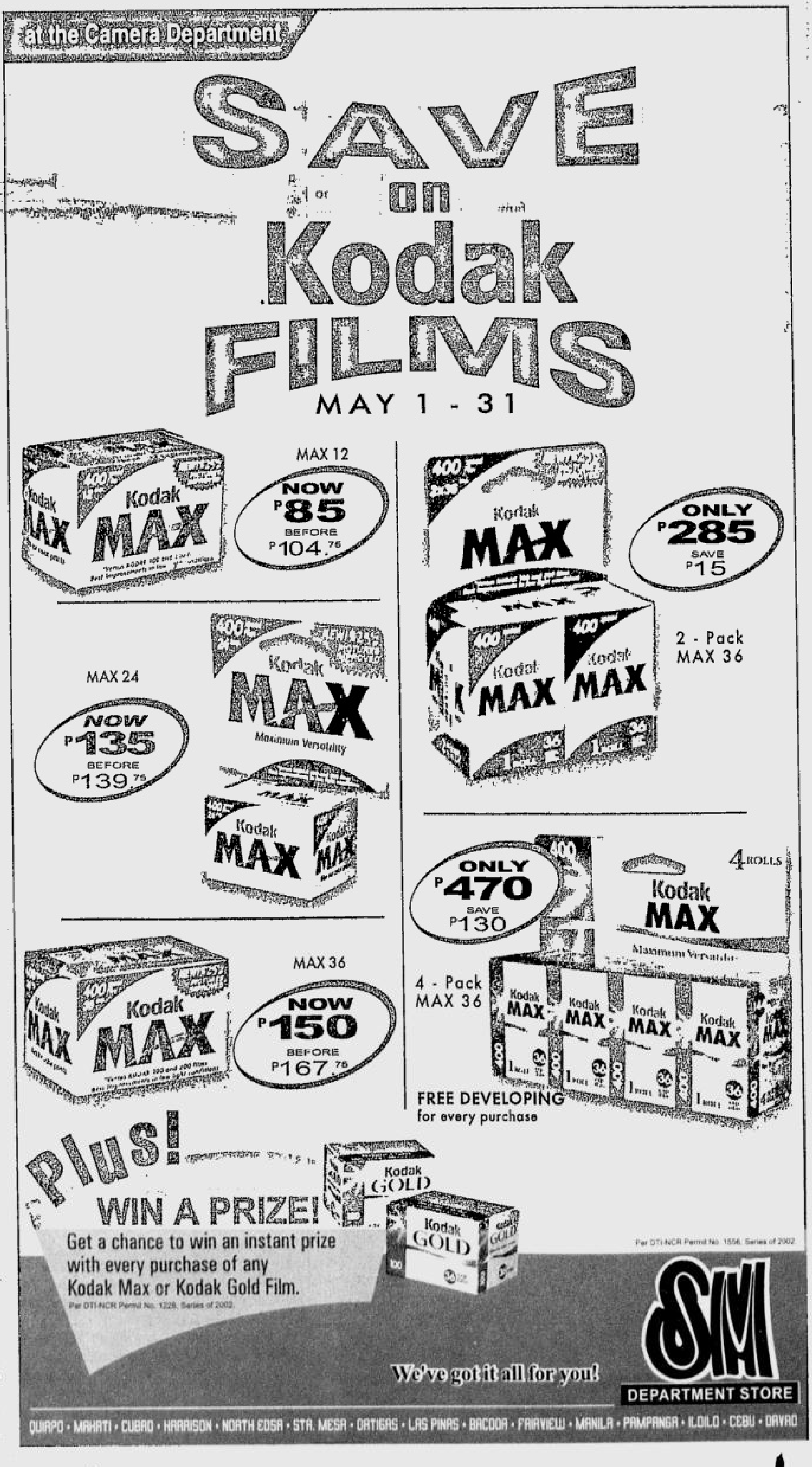
In a ruling containing passages that might have jumped out of a May-December soap opera, US District Judge David Carter also ruled that Marshall's son, E. Pierce Marshall, tried to deny Smith the rightful inheritance from 14 months of marriage by mounting a campaign of deceit and dishonesty.

Carter, ruling in a six-year legal dispute between the former Vickie Lynn Smith and Pierce Marshall, awarded Smith $44.3 million in compensatory damages and an equal amount in punitive damages.

Carter found that Pierce Marshall owed Smith—a former topless dancer from Mexia, Texas, who met her future husband at a Houston strip club when she was 24 and he was 86—punitive damages for a long campaign of skullduggery to prevent her from getting the money his father wanted her to have.

"The evidence of willfulness, maliciousness and fraud is overwhelming," Carter wrote in his 79-page ruling, which came two months after a hearing into the case that included testimony from both Smith and Pierce Marshall.

"Pierce and (his attorney Edwin) Hunter engaged in a pattern of deceiving J. Howard for nearly two years," Carter wrote. *Reuters*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HOLIDAYS

'Spider-Man' renews big-screen interest in comic-book superheroes

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

SPIDER-Man's big splash at the box-office is proving to be a boon to quite a number of superhero-inspired film productions. Even those that had been in pre-production limbo for sometime have found a new lease on life.

Sandra Bullock as "Wonder Woman"? Ben Affleck as "Daredevil"? Brendan Fraser as "Superman"? Whew!

Write us: Philippine Daily Inquirer, Saturday Special section, Showbiz Q and A, Chino Roces Ave. (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo sts., Makati City.

This week's Q and A:

"I am a fan of actor Chow Yun-Fat. I discovered him in "The Replacement Killers," his first Hollywood movie. Is he married? Will I see him in a new movie soon? Please tell me more about him."—*A.J., Baguio City.*

Chow Yun-Fat (also known as Amon Chow, Jau Yun Faat or Zhou Runfa) was already a superstar in Asia before he starred in his Hollywood debut with Mira Sorvino. He was born on May 18, 1955 in the island of Lamma, near Hongkong's Victoria Harbour.

At age 10, his family moved to Hong Kong. He started to indulge in two of his major influences in life: Chinese opera and American movies. He worked as a bellboy and waiter. In 1973, he answered a casting call for Hong Kong's largest TV company, the Shaw brothers' TVB, and was accepted (along with future director Ringo Lam) in their acting school, and started appearing as an extra on TVB's soaps, like "Shanghai Beach." His father, an oilrigger, died in 1974, the year he landed his first TV role in "The Reincarnation."

Awards

Yun-Fat's early movies were critical and commercial flops. But his luck changed when he started winning awards offshore. In 1985, he won Taiwan's Golden Horse Award for Best Actor and another Best Actor trophy from the Asia Pacific Film Festival for director Leung Po-Chi's "Hong Kong, 1941."

It was on the strength of his performance in this movie that he landed the lead in John Woo's "A Better Tomorrow" and the rest, as they say, is history. Almost overnight, he became a superstar in Asia. Stores around Hong Kong sold out the sunglasses and trenchcoats similar to those worn in "A Better Tomorrow."

Soon after, he won three Hong Kong Film Awards for Best Actor in "A Better Tomorrow" (1987), "City on Fire" (1988) and "All About Ah Long" (1990). On the same year he won an HKFA award for his performance in "A Better Tomorrow," and another Golden Horse Best Actor Award for "An Autumn's Tale," one of his personal favorites.

The 6'1" Buddhist made a lot of blockbuster movies in Hong Kong, quite a number of which we saw and enjoyed in the early '90s: "Once A Thief," "God of Gamblers," "Hard-Boiled," and "The Killer," with their formulaic poetry-in-motion violence and empathetic performances.

Wife

He met his wife Jasmine in 1984 and married her two years later. He made his last Hong Kong film, "Peace Hotel," in 1995 and decided to follow his friend John Woo ("Mission Impossible 2," "Face/Off," "Broken Arrow") to try his luck in Hollywood.

"The Replacement Killers" was not a huge hit but he managed to impress American producers with his good looks, movie-star bearing and acting ability. It was followed by "The Corruptor" (with Mark Wahlberg), "Anna and the King" (the dramatic adaptation of "The King and I," with Jodie Foster) and Ang Lee's sweeping "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" (2000).

Up next is the comic book-based "Bulletproof Monk." Also in different stages of production are "King's Ransom" (his reunion with John Woo) and "Waiting" (with acclaimed actress Gong Li).

For fan mail, try this address: c/o William Morris Agency, 151 El Camino Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90212 U.S.A.

Trivia: Chow Yun -Fat turned down the role of Morpheus (played by Lawrence Fishburne) in "The Matrix."

"I grew up following the adventures of DC and Marvel's superheroes. It is such a thrill everytime a big screen or small screen adaptation comes out, from Superman to Batman to X-Men to Spider-Man. Is it true Ben Affleck will star as "Daredevil, The Man Without Fear"?—*Anthony Sugay, Cebu City.*

Yes, it's true. We also grew up fantasizing that we had superheroes' magnetic powers, x-ray vision and flying ability, so we welcome screen adaptations of their stories (even the campy, low-budget "Justice League of America" that featured "Fire," "Ice," "The Atom," "Martian Manhunter," etc. We saw it on cable TV a couple of months ago).

Success

A lot of these "superhero" projects have been in different stages of production for sometime, but the success of "Spider-Man" and "X-Men" has rekindled interest in them, and a number of them are being fast-tracked to take advantage of the public interest that "Spidey," the mutants and the teen-age Superman ("Smallville") generated.

Ben Affleck will soon be seen as the blind superhero in "Daredevil;" Hugh Jackman, James Marsden and Halle Berry will reprise their roles as Wolverine, Cyclops and Storm in "X-Men 2;" Tobey and Kirsten have committed to two Spider-Man sequels, with James Franco playing the villainous "Hobgoblin" to avenge the death of his father, "The Green Goblin;" Ang Lee tries his versatile hands at humanizing "The Hulk," with Eric Bana in the lead; Gillian Anderson, while promoting the final "X-Files" episode in a radio show, revealed that she is thrilled to play a baddie in "Batman, Year One" (while Antonio Sabato Jr. has expressed his interest in playing the younger Dark Knight).

There's talk that Nicolas Cage will team-up with Tim Burton in a darker "Superman," but we're glad negotiations fell through (What, Clark Scissorhands?). "Charlie's Angels" director McG has since taken over the project, with possibly Brendan Fraser in the lead and Cameron Diaz as Lois Lane.

Workouts

Ashley Judd is currently training to play the role of "Catwoman" in a full-length movie version, a role Michelle Pfeiffer nixed, unfortunately. She jokes, "I hope the workouts will make my butt look better than Michelle's."

Director Peyton Reed ("Bring It On") has been tapped to direct "The Fantastic Four," the super group of Reed Richards, Sue and Johnny Storm and Ben "The Thing" Grimm. "Iron Man" wasn't as lucky, as the dropping of "Buffy" creator Joss Whedon further pushed the project into development limbo.

What really excites us is the "Wonder Woman" movie being prepared by Joel Silver. Sandra Bullock is closing in on the role, but she awaits script revisions. She did not like the first draft. One other actress is being considered for the role-- newcomer Jordan Bayne ("Under Hellgate Bridge"). Let's see if the new Diana Prince will live up to Lynda Carter's mystique and aura.

"Where do we write "Betty La Fea" star Ana Maria Orozco? She makes our day!"—*Yoli Garcia, Queensrow Subd., Bacoor, Cavite.*

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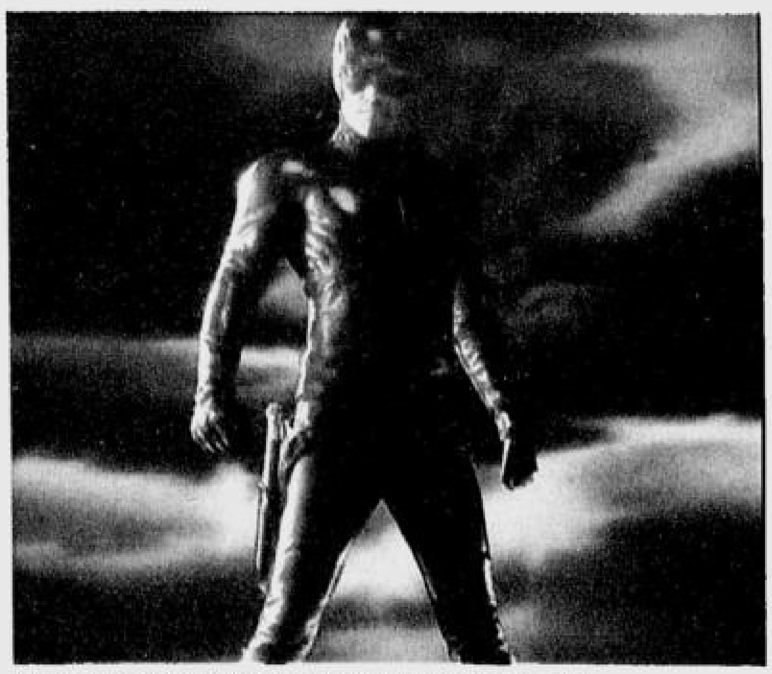
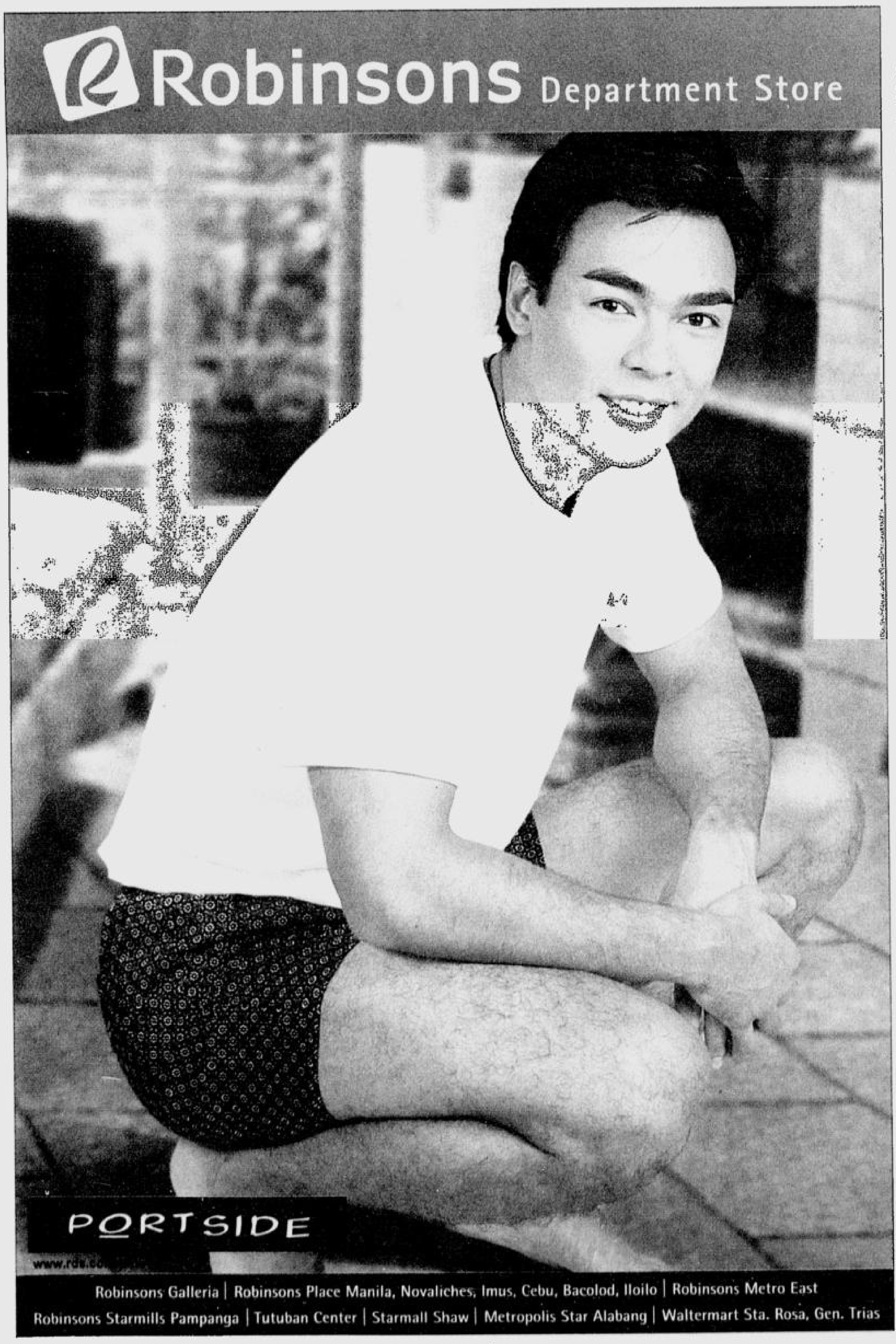


BEN Affleck as the blind superhero in "Daredevil."



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Food cravings

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

AS SOON as we landed in Manila, I let my mind and appetite drift to what it was craving for. Canada is full of excellent Chinese restaurants, but having that almost every week can be too much. Especially for my kids. Common expressions to my ears are, "Oh no, Yaohan again" or "Not Chinese!"

Objection

I am almost alone in my perpetual desire for Chinese cuisine. With the objection of the majority of my family to my choice, I look forward to coming back to Manila to indulge in what I and no one else wants.

The first thought that came to mind was Ma Mon Luk. Having no time to go there, I had ordered three special *siopaos* and a special *mami*. Of course, this is not the same as dining in the restaurant, since the unusual aroma of the place is absent. In the many years I have been eating their *siopao*, it has always been delicious. One cannot go there in the late afternoon for the siopao is all gone. I go to the Quezon Blvd. Banawe branch.

Healthy

The next place I went to was Oriental Restaurant beside Circle Theater. I could not get my mind off the Golden *Kutchay*. Loaded with *tofu*, it is not only tasty, it is also healthy.

In the process of satisfying my craving, I also discovered their excellent crab dishes. The crab was meaty and came with a sauce that the people at the place recommended. Excellent! I then realized that I was craving for Chinese Pinoy food. That, too, was satisfied.

Then came the Angus Roast Prime Rib of Beef at Katre. This is a whole seven-rib roast beef with a nice au jus and some mashed potato on the side. A slice is about 250 to 300 grams. Meals like this make one's problems take a vacation. This is what I describe as a heavenly meal. "*Mura pa.*" It is now part of the regular menu. Katre is on Scout Rallos along Tomas Morato in Quezon City. Fantastic!

It's funny when you let your mind wander to where it'll take you. I wonder where my next craving will fly me?

Happy eating!

'Tunog OPM Dekada sa Tent-Ah' slated on May 30 at the Fort

By Remy M. Umerez

THE SOUND of the '70s had a strong influence on Milky Evangelista. He grew up not only with the music of the Hotdog or VST but danced with it, having been a member of the Vicor Crowd dancers for four years.

Fundraising concert

Today, Milky heads Party City, an events specialist. On May 30, he will present a fundraising concert, "Tunog OPM Dekada sa Tent-Ah" at the NBC Tent, Fort Bonifacio, Global City. It will feature the bands of the '70s as special guests in Act One. Act Two belongs to Q & A, a fast-rising band specializing in the Sound of the '70s.

The participating bands of the '70s are the Hotdog, VST and The Boyfriends. Pop icon Leah Navarro is a featured guest.

Main act

The main act, the Q & A, is a refreshing retro band of session musicians playing the music of the '60s and '70s.

Members are Marvin Querido (formerly of Second Wind), drummer Mike Alba (from Passage band), Kettle Mata on guitar, Francis de Leon on sax, John Campo on trumpet, Toby Zapanta on trombone and record producer Chito Ilagan on bass.

On vocals are Jay Marquez, Lissa del Valle, Oliver Samson Conda, Michael Yonting and Jay Javier.

The all-night event hopes to raise funds for the Shining Light Foundation which provides assistance to less fortunate individuals with diabetic and related ailments. Call 535-2168.

Q&A. Retro band of session musicians.

For comedian Robin Williams, turning 50 is a celebration

By Nestor U. Torre

TO many of his fans, Robin Williams is a hyperkinetic Peter Pan, forever antic—and ageless. Ever since he played a spaced-out alien on TV, Williams has never stopped frenziedly improvising on life's wacky warps and woofs.

Free association

Even in televised interviews, the "mad" comic carries on like a house on fire. He has given "free association" a new, frenetic intensity as he goes from one topic to another. All it takes is one word for him to launch into a one-minute blitzkrieg monologue that leaves his listeners limp from laughter—and begging for more.

All that rat-tat-tat talk could be a lot of nonsense, but Williams is keenly aware and selective about what he says, despite the madcap "insanity" of his style. That's why show biz pundits describe him as "an an improvisational comedian—but of the highest rank."

Success

He became a film star after his success on TV as Mork, the alien from Ork, on the hit sitcom "Mork and Mindy." His "maniacally" intense performances have had a method of their own that have brought him Oscar nominations—like his portrayal of the radio DJ in "Good Morning Vietnam" and the literature teacher in "Dead Poets Society."

His filmography to date: 1977, "Can I Do It... Till I Need Glasses." 1980, "Popeye." 1992, "The World According to Garp." 1983, "The Survivors." 1984, "Moscow on the Hudson." 1986, "Club Paradise," "The Best of Times." 1987, "Good Morning, Vietnam." 1988, "Letters Home from Vietnam (narration). 1989, "Dead Poets Society," "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen).

'Mrs. Doubtfire'

1990, "Cadillac Man." 1991, "Hook," "The Fisher King," "Dead Again," "Shakes the Clown." 1992, "Aladdin" (voice only), "Fern Gully... The Last Rainforest" (voice only). 1992, "Toys." 1993, "Mrs. Doubtfire."

Plus: "Being Human;" "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar" (cameo); "Nine Months," "Jumanji," "The Birdcage," "Jack," "The Secret Agent" (cameo), "Hamlet," "Father's Day," "Flubber," "Deconstructing Henry," "Good Will Hunting," "Millennium Man," and now, "Death to Smoochy."

But now that the antic star has turned 50, what are the changes we can expect in his performances? Let's hear it from the "mad" comic himself:

No big deal

"Fact is, turning 50 *was* no big deal. What was a big deal for me was when I turned 30. I was hardcore drinking and everything else then. It was like the end of something big and the start of something very small. But I eventually got over that end-of-the-world feeling.

"So, when I turned 40, it was OK. And hitting 50 was—lovely! It was a celebration of a lot of things. You're at a point where maybe both your parents are gone. And you start to have more of a sense of your own mortality. A sense of what's meaningful, what you want to do. You still have time—but will you throw it all away?

Goals

"So, I've decided: I'm going to do those things that really interest me. I'm going to find projects that I really believe in, well-written pieces with interesting actors and directors. I'm going to be a good husband and father. And I'm going to be as healthy as I can be. Those are my goals, you can hold me to them."

How will these attitudinal adjustments translate into the movies he'll actually be making? For some weird reason, Robin is playing villains in three new films in a row! From his hyper-inspiring characters in the past, he's playing it really mean, to reveal his darker side as a performer.

Disgraced host

In "Death to Smoochy," he's the disgraced host of a children's TV show who plots to kill his replacement. In "One Hour Photo," he's a man who's fixated on a family through their photographs. And in "Insomnia," he plays a murderer—and a blackmailer!

WILLIAMS. Plays villains in three new films.

Does he love playing villains? You bet. Why? "Villains are not bound by normal rules. They function in netherworlds."

Hmm, looks like Robin could be angling to be cast in the next "Star Wars" movie—as Darth Vader's blackly-comic alter-ego?

Evening with Steve Raymer

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

MICHAEL H. Anderson, counselor for Public Affairs of the US Embassy, tendered a cocktail party in honor of National Geographic photographer Steve Raymer last May 20. Most of the guests were local photographers, like veteran shooter Manny Goloyugo, award winning photographer Romeo Gacad of Agence France-Press, AP Chief Photographer Bullit Marquez, Rueters' Erik de Castro, Photojournalist David Greedy of Getty Images, plus Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication president Corazon Claudio, Ph.D., UCLA film graduate Cynthia Quirino, Anding Roces, Virginia Moreno, travel writer Rebecca de Villa, Robert Lane of Silahis Center, US Embassy officials Angela R. Dickey, Rose Wehrli, etc.

New book

Steve Raymer's new book, "Living Faith: Inside the Muslim World of SE Asia," was published in 2001 by Asia Images Editions of Singapore. He is the author and photographer of "St. Petersburg," a 1994 illustrated book about imperial Russia, and the photographer of "Land of the Ascending Dragon: Rediscovering Vietnam" (1997).

Professor Steve Raymer, a National Geographic Magazine staff photographer for more than two decades, teaches photojournalism, media ethics, and international news-gathering at Indiana University in Bloomington.

In 1976, the National Press Photographers Association named Raymer "Magazine Photographer of the Year" - one of photojournalism's most coveted awards. He has received a citation for excellence in foreign reporting from the Overseas Press Club and is a four-time winner of first-prize awards from the White House News Photographers' Association.

Raymer has lectured on photojournalism ethics and practice at universities in the United States, Russia, Poland, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam.

SNACK 2002 exhibit

Meanwhile, SNACK 2002 holds an exhibit of works by children Museo Pambata on June 1 until June 7. Displayed are photographs, pottery, drawings and tie-dyed scarves made by the SNACK kids. There will be awarding of prizes to the winners of the Konica photography contest, and an on-the-spot coloring book contest for 50 out-of-school youth sponsored by Easy To Learn Books, endorsed by Jackielou Blanco.

The Konica Photo contest sponsored by Columbia Photo Sales focuses on the theme "Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints, killing nothing but time." First prize winner will receive one Konica Centuria 20 camera; second prize winner will get one Konica Mini Silver Camera, and the third prize is one Konica Centuria 10 camera. SNACK CAMP is the brainchild of journalist and artists' manager Bibsy Carballo, as part of her commitment to bring children closer to nature.

COCKTAILS FOR NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER. From left, Romy Gacad, photography student Maricor Lustre, Erik de Castro, Mandy Navasero, Steve Raymer, Bullit Marquez, Michael Anderson, US Embassy Public Affairs Counselor, and David Greedy of Getty Images.

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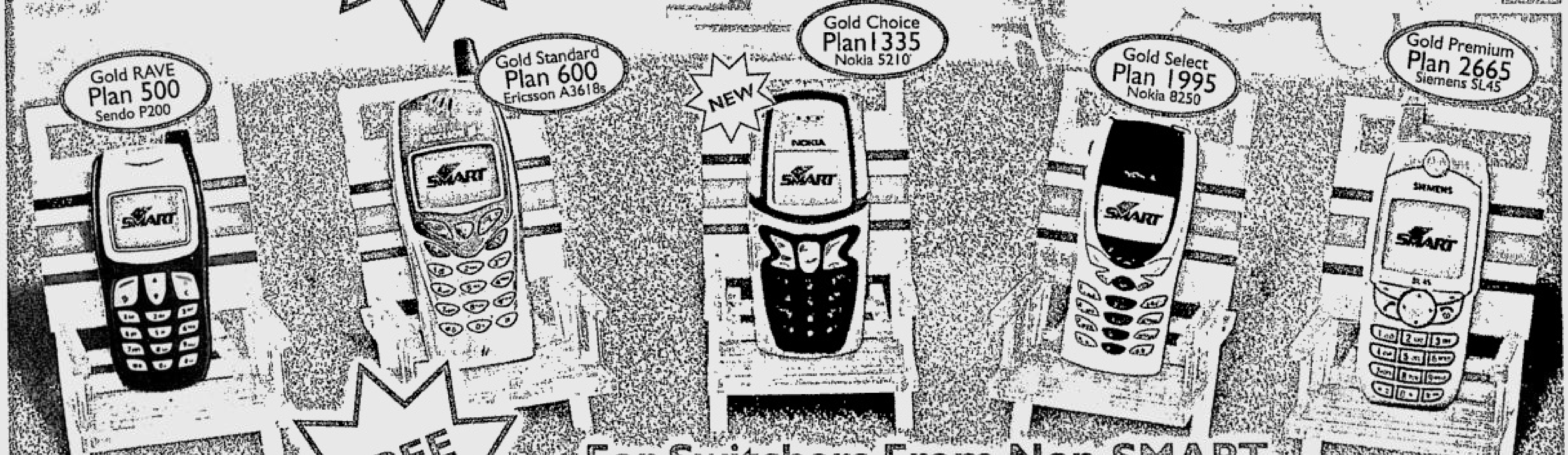
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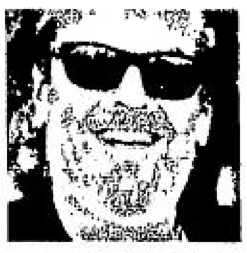
Nicholson says playing 'Schmidt' role was pure misery



NICHOLSON. Journey of self-discovery.

By Joelle Diderich

CANNES, France—Jack Nicholson lets it all hang out in "About Schmidt," the tale of a retired man facing up to his mediocre life which the actor said was the most miserable role of his life.

Rave reviews

Directed by independent filmmaker Alexander Payne, the tragi-comedy is battling for the coveted Palme d'Or at the Cannes film festival, where the movie earned rave reviews.

Also screening on Wednesday was Aki Kaurismaki's "The Man Without a Past," which the Finnish director described as an antidote to the hopelessness of life.

Nicholson turns in a bravura performance as Warren Schmidt, who sets out for a road trip in his 35-foot motor home in order to make sense of his life after the sudden death of his wife.

Key to it was Nicholson's willingness to flout Hollywood convention by playing a character who is both physically and morally unattractive.

"I couldn't look at myself in the mirror the whole three months I was doing this picture because I thought I would never return to myself," the actor said on Wednesday.

No favors

Schmidt is a fat, balding man with a comb-over and Payne, known for stripping his actors of all artifice, did the 65-year-old Nicholson no favors.

"This is the least vain performance I've ever given," Nicholson said.

Schmidt, recently retired from his job as an actuary at an insurance firm in the US Midwest, falls apart when his wife dies, and sets off for Denver, where his daughter is about to marry an under-achieving waterbed salesman.

He shares his journey of self-discovery in unintentionally comic letters to a six-year-old Tanzanian orphan he sponsors through a charity.

"He's a miserable man to inhabit, worse than any drama I've ever done," Nicholson said. "You don't get the joke when you're playing the character, you just have to be that guy, so it was trying in that way."

Payne, who won critical acclaim with his student politics drama "Election," said working with one of the sacred monsters of the industry was less daunting than it sounded.

"He made it very easy," the director told a news conference.

"He was willing and able to do anything that the film required."

Warm applause

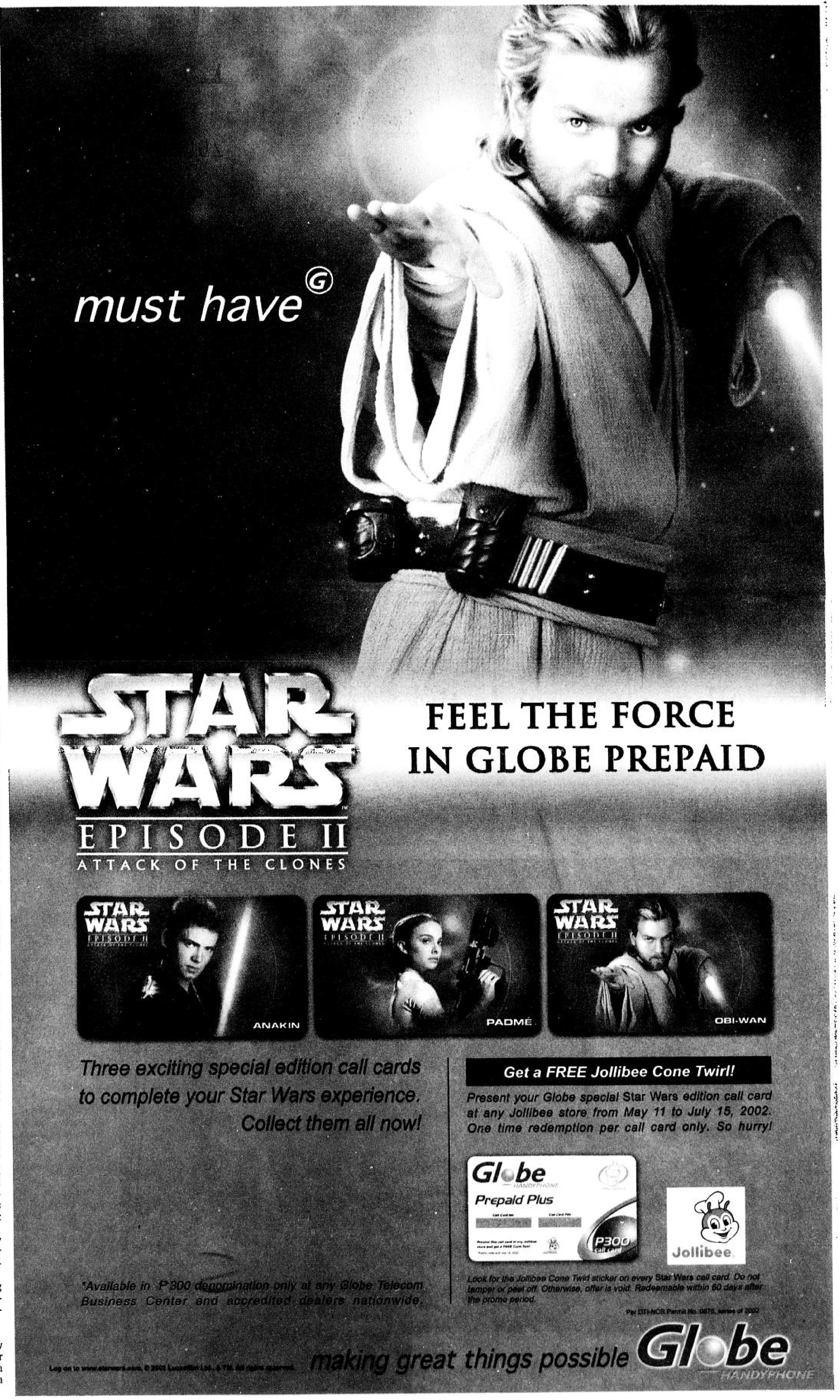
Kaurismaki drew warm applause for "The Man Without a Past," the story of a man who loses his memory after he is savagely beaten up shortly after his arrival in Helsinki.

Still amnesiac, he finds love with a volunteer at the Salvation Army who helps him to rediscover his humanity.

The movie, populated by eccentric characters, reflects Kaurismaki's love of the 1950s. The music of the era permeates the film, which features several musical interludes, while artificial lighting gives objects a bright glow.

The quirky filmmaker said he had wanted to create a homage to Frank

JACK/ p. D2



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making great things possible Globe HANDYPHONE

Forget Mr Ed, think Spirit—a 'never say die' stallion

By Paul Majendie

CANNES, France—Forget Mr Ed. Think Spirit.

Fresh from its worldwide triumph with the riotous "Shrek," Hollywood's DreamWorks studio is taking the film festival route again to launch in Cannes another animated saga—"Spirit"—about a horse "whose spirit will not be broken."

No equine chatter

But there will be no equine chatter from Spirit along the lines of Eddie Murphy's quick-fire stream of consciousness as the donkey in "Shrek." When you want to know what the galloping hero is thinking, you will have to rely on voiceover musings from Matt Damon and the soaring songs of Canadian rocker Bryan Adams.

Adams is to launch the movie in style today at the world's most famous film festival. The gravelly-voiced rocker steps up live on stage to sing along with the soundtrack.

So don't expect Spirit to tell you all about his life in the Old West where he chases a soaring eagle, gets captured by the US army, flees with an Indian named Little Creek and falls in love with a pretty Pinto called Rain.

"I have two words and four letters for you that tell you everything you need to know about why we decided not to have the horse talk—Mr Ed," said DreamWorks' Jeffrey Katzenberg, producer of "Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron."

Comedy

"It doesn't matter where you come from in the world, what language you speak. We all know Mr Ed (the cult '60s situation comedy in the United States about a talking horse) and the problem is that as soon as the horse starts talking, it is a comedy."

Katzenberg was fiercely proud last year when "Shrek" became the first animated film in 50 years to be selected for official competition in Cannes, famed as an invaluable platform for art-house movies.

"It was a true badge of honor and distinction for the film and was very valuable for it," Katzenberg told the trade magazine Screen International.

Premiere screening

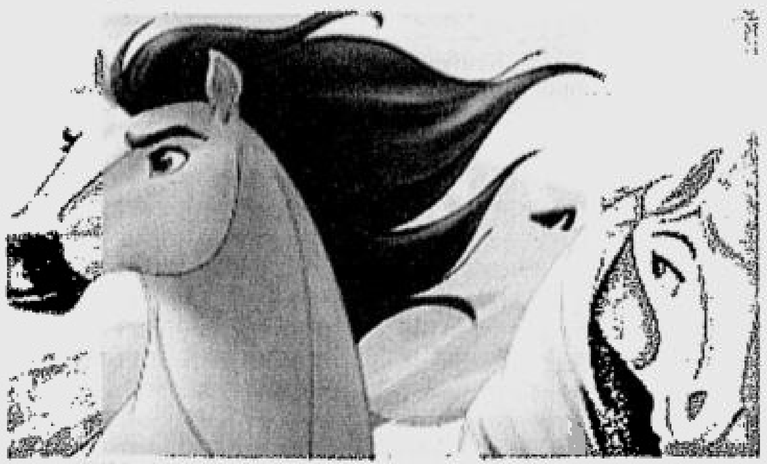
When the Cannes top brass asked what they were up to this year, DreamWorks offered up a premiere screening of "Spirit." "I asked them what they would think about playing the score live to the film but also having the eight songs performed live alongside," Katzenberg said. "That was very exciting for them."

But, as the influential Hollywood daily Variety warned, the film's marketers could face a tough call attracting a sizeable box office for the film beyond the obvious target audience of pre-teen girls.

Reviewing the film, which is set to launch in the United States on May 24, the paper said: "There's nothing thrilling or new about the work here—but accomplished it is." And no one could accuse the film of failing on the political correctness score.

"The story of the Old West from a horse's point of view sports a noble 'my spirit will never be broken' theme as well as a fashionably p.c. pro-horse-and-Indian, anti-white settler political bent, backed up by a host of soaring Bryan Adams vocals," it concluded. *Reuters*

There will be no equine chatter from Spirit along the line of Eddie Murphy's quick-fire dialogue in 'Shrek'



"SPIRIT." Politically correct.

SWITCHING CHANNELS

Rudy Fernandez, Rosanna Roces star in new GMA sitcom

By Edmund L. Sicam

ROSANNA Roces is back and raring to go after a three-week suspension (GMA excutives call it a vacation leave) that she incurred after making what many thought as uncalled-for remarks about the Rico Yan case. Now aside from her regular appearance as co-host on "Star Talk," she stars opposite Rudy Fernandez in the new GMA sitcom "Daboy en Da Girl," which premiered on May 23 at 9 p.m.

Other stars in the sitcom are Sunshine Dizon, Lolit Solis, Jeffrey Quizon, Isko Salvador, Rico J. Puno, Robert Ortega, Cacai Brosas and (introducing) Uri Vanden Bos and Rochelle, the Sex Bomb dancer.

Osang admits that she felt really bad when she was "suspended," more so when GMA apologized for the incident. She thought of quitting the show but after a good cry and a heart-to-heart talk with Lolit Solis, her manager, she decided to stay. The sexy star took a break from show biz to bask in the sun in Phuket, Thailand.

When she came back, she spent more time with her kids, disciplining them when it was necessary and looking over their shoulders. There were times when, understandably, the kids preferred their old mom, who was busy with tapings and shootings. It was, however, a good time to bond with her kids and husband.

The actress is still on Cloud 9 after winning Urian's Best Actress award for her performance in "La Vida Rosa," an award that she shared with Assunta De Rossi. We asked her pointblank if her co-host on "Startalk," Urian member Butch Francisco had alerted her about the victory. She said that whenever she crossed paths with Butch, the latter would always avoid talking to her. So that got her thinking that she probably won.

Reason

On the other hand, she also figured the reason he was avoiding her was that she hadn't won. When her name was announced, it was still a surprise to her. The tears that she shed were quite genuine, she said. She was probably referring to the long road she travelled to claim this award.

As an aside, Osang explained why she did not thank her manager, Lolit Solis, during her acceptance speech. She kidded that people might think Lolit rigged the Urian so her *anak* can win.

What made the presscon for the TV series quite interesting was Osang's confession that she was hooked on drugs two years ago and that's why she and her husband parted ways for a while.

"DABOY EN DA GIRL." Airs Thursdays at 9 p.m. on GMA.

Although there was a preview of her talking about her drug problem on "Star Talk," it was the first time we heard her talk about it at length.

She said she was not depressed when she tried drugs for the first time. In fact, she was quite happy when one of her *barkada* invited her to try it out. That initial hit led to more sessions until finally, it became a habit, a very costly one. There came a point when she felt she was going to die. She started getting convulsions and her body shook uncontrollably. They didn't want to bring her to the hospital because it would have caused a scandal. Imagine the headlines: Rosanna Roces on drugs! They were able to control her shaking by making her drink a lot of iced water, and she managed to survive the experience.

Meanwhile, her habit was beginning to affect her show biz appearances as well as her relationship with her husband. It reached a point where she asked Tito to leave their house. After about six months of leading a crazy existence, Osang came to her senses. She was spending a lot of money on her habit amd even covered the expenses of her friends.

Her show biz career was suffering so one night, she decided to quit, just like that. She didn't go to a hospital for detox or attend any rehab program. She just stopped.

Today, two years later, she has lost the craving for the drug and looks at it as a learning experience, one that she can also use to deepen her acting performance.

Panic time

We watched GMA and Globe Handyphone's ""TXTRS 5"" recently and found the questions relatively easy to answer. The harder part had to do with contestants using their feet to key in the correct answers on the giant pad laid out on the floor. Several contestants panicked and keyed in the wrong letters. They were also unable to use the clear button to correct their answers.

It was simpler when several persons were on the pad while the celebrity coach (in the episode we watched, the coaches were Isabel Granada and Bobby Andrews) guided them which letter to step on. When the players worked alone, they had to do everything by themselves and that was when the pressure told on them since they only had seconds to complete the answer.

Isabel Granada's team won that contest, bringing home close to P 200,000.

Jericho and Donita at Glorietta

We didn't realize how popular Jericho Rosales was until we saw him perform at the launching of the i2i eyewear at the Glorietta activity area. Donita Rose was the other endorser who was present, but we already know her effect on audiences. Jericho was still a question mark to us when it came to fan adulation.

After a fashion show where models paraded in all-white outfits resembling martial arts uniforms, highlighting their dark glasses, Jericho roared in on his motorcycle and that's when the whole activity area shook with screaming fans. The crowd wanted to get a closer look at the actor. The screaming continued when he did his numbers and started giving away i2i products.

Donita, on the other hand, showed us why she is a successful MTV host. Even with her fractured Tagalog, she handled her spiels well and managed to outtalk Jericho. At one point, she said that she would marry anyone who had a picture of her, aside from the one in the i2i promo material. Somebody did have a photo but it was a seven-year-old kid. She handled the situation well, eliciting a lot of laughter from the audience.

Skywalker sure needs the Force with him right now

By Paul Majendie

CANNES, France—Anakin Skywalker sure needs The Force to be with him right now.

Hero

Young Canadian actor Hayden Christensen, suddenly propelled to international stardom as the hero of the latest "Star Wars" epic, must wonder what has hit him.

He is on a whirlwind media tour around the globe promoting the movie. If it's Friday, this must be Cannes.

Looking longingly out of the window of his elegant hotel at the luxury yachts bobbing in the deep blue Mediterranean, he launched into yet another interview in yet another city. The publicity machine is insatiable.

"I just came from Madrid. We were in London before that and then Toronto before that and before that Skywalker Ranch (director George Lucas's home in Marin County, California)," he told Reuters Television, shaking his head in wonderment at the rollercoaster he is riding right now.

So what did he think of Cannes, the elegant Riviera resort that plays host to the world's most famous festival every May?

Soundbite

"Honestly I just got off the plane and I have been doing this ever since," he said as the interviewers from around the world queued up to get their soundbite from the 21-year-old actor who fought off more than 400 hopefuls to land one of the most coveted roles in movie history.

Reflecting on the real world just outside his hotel window, he said "It looks so beautiful with the boats on the water and the people walking out there. And the sunshine—I haven't seen too much of that recently." "I would like to catch up on a little bit of sleep and see the city a little bit. I would like to go on a boat. Maybe tomorrow when I get a day off. It's a little bit chaotic. I am a little bit disoriented with all the travelling and stuff." But there was one piece of news sure to put a big smile on his pallid face. The latest "Star Wars" saga—"Attack of the Clones"—topped $30 million at the American box office on its very first day of release.

Fond memories

"You are the first one to tell me that. That is pretty cool.

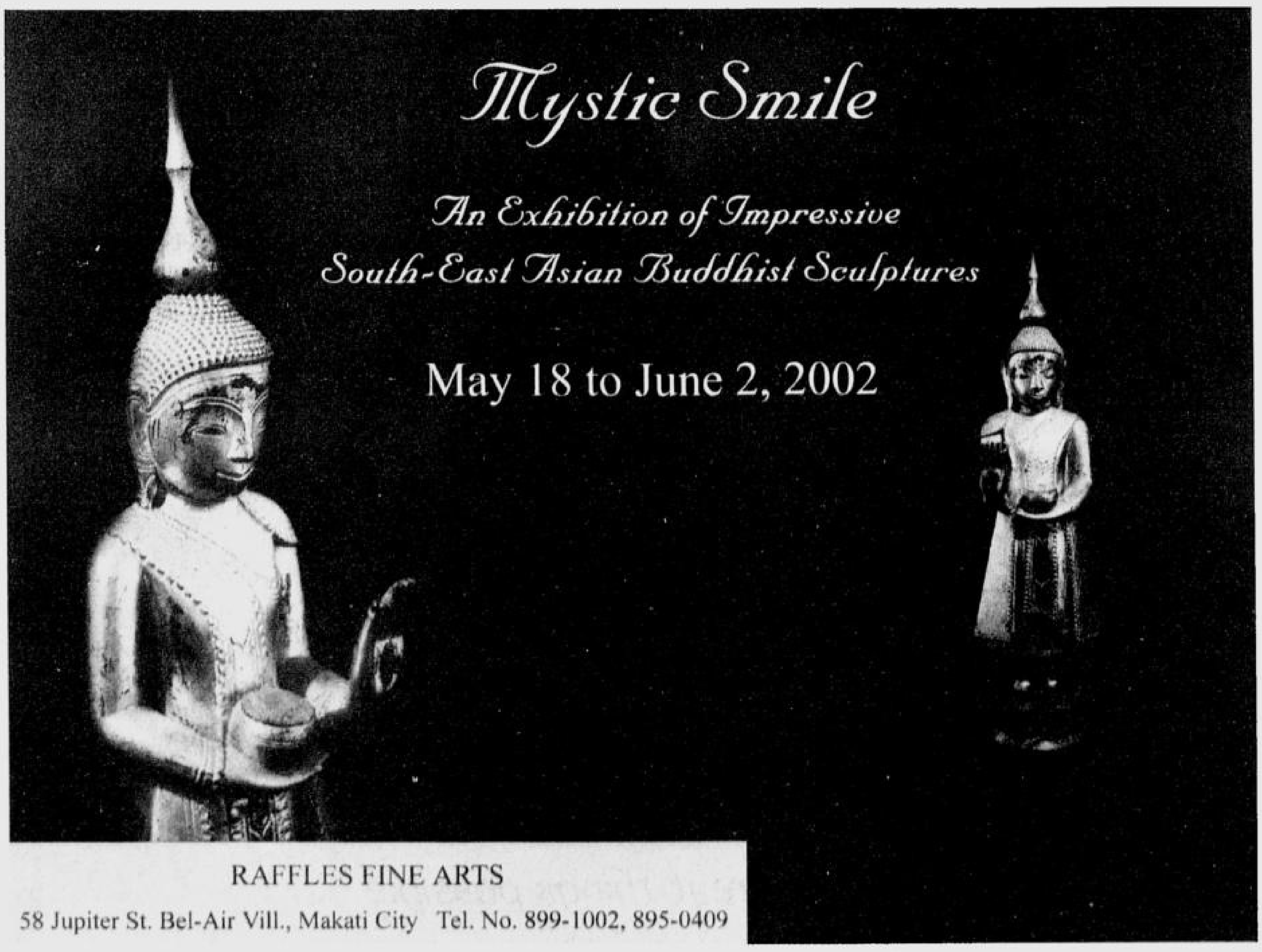
It is nice to know people want to go and see it. That is not bad." But he still has fond memories of filming the "Star Wars" epic with Ewan McGregor who plays Obi-Wan Kenobi, Anakin Skywalker's guide on the path to Jedi knighthood. *Reuters*

CHRISTENSEN. Whirlwind media tour around the globe.

Nicholson says . . .

From p. D1

Capra's classic "It's a Wonderful Life." "Since there is no hope left in the world, I tried to make a hopeful film without too much pessimism, because everything is kind of wrong nowadays," he said. *Reuters*



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The 'M*A*S*H' gang reunites on Fox TV

By Steve Gorman

LOS ANGELES—Thirty years after the landmark comedy "M*A*S*H" debuted on US television, Hawkeye is doing a one-man show on Broadway, Radar paints wildlife for a living and Hot-Lips designs jewelry.

On Friday, all three—a.k.a. Alan Alda, Gary Burghoff and Loretta Swit, respectively—will return to primetime with the rest of the surviving 4077th gang for the first time since the show's finale set an all-time ratings record.

Sister studio

Oddly enough, the "M*A*S*H" reunion will air not on CBS, the network that carried the original series for 11 years, but on Fox, courtesy of its sister studio, 20th Century Fox Television, which produced the show.

The two-hour Fox special is the latest in a flood of reunions, retrospectives and anniversary tributes sweeping the networks this month, saluting everyone from Jackie Gleason and Bill Cosby to "Laverne & Shirley." "M*A*S*H" co-star Mike Farrell, an executive producer of the retrospective, said he and fellow cast members had long resisted the idea of a reunion telecast.

Preposterous premise

"In my mind, 'reunion' always meant putting together some sort of preposterous premise for a two-hour movie where everyone just happens to be in the same place at the same time, and using that as a kind of pretext for telling a story," Farrell told Reuters.

Instead, the 'M*A*S*H': 30th Anniversary Reunion Special" brings the actors back together for collective reminiscing, individual interviews and clips of the show's most memorable moments, Farrell said. The reunion itself, taped last week, "was really a hoot," he said.

Farrell, who joined the cast in the fourth season as Hawkeye's best pal, B.J. Hunnicut, said he and several former co-stars have stayed in touch over the years, despite heading in different directions.

Alda went on to appear in numerous TV and film projects and currently stars on Broadway as a physicist in the one-man play "QED." Farrell is perhaps the most familiar to present-day TV audiences, co-starring on the NBC drama "Providence."

FARRELL, SWIT AND ALDA. Their hit sitcom dealt with such issues as circumstantial ethics and the morality of war.

Jewelry line

Swit, who played the feisty head nurse, Margaret "Hot Lips" Houlihan, recently finished a tour of "The Vagina Monologues" in London and is designing her own jewelry line. And Burghoff, best known as the quiet but clairvoyant camp clerk, Cpl. "Radar" O'Reilly (and the only "M*A*S*H" regular to play the same role on TV and film), is an artist who specializes in wildlife renderings.

Joining all of them for the reunion were Wayne Rogers ("Trapper John" McIntyre), Jamie Farr (the cross-dressing Cpl. Klinger), William Christopher (chaplain Father Mulcahy), Harry Morgan (the gruff but kindly Col. Sherman Potter) and David Ogden Stiers (the blue-blooded Charles Emerson Winchester).

There also will be tributes to two of the show's late co-stars—McLean Stevenson, who played the original commanding officer, Col. Blake, and Larry Linville, the sniveling Major Frank Burns.

One of the few hit TV series to come from the big screen, "M*A*S*H" was based on the 1970 Korean War satire directed by Robert Altman and adapted from a novel of the same name by a real-life doctor who actually served in Korea.

It centered on the antics of Captain "Hawkeye" Pierce and fellow doctors and nurses of the 4077th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital—MASH for short—as they struggled to keep their sanity and save lives. When not tending to waves of wounded GIs, Hawkeye and his pals passed the time playing practical jokes, canoodling with nurses and drinking to excess.

Beyond poking fun

A far cry from the military sitcoms that came before it—like "McHale's Navy" or "Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C."—"M*A*S*H" went beyond merely poking fun at Army life to deal with such issues as circumstantial ethics and the morality of war.

Favorite episode

On occasion, the show was dead serious. Farrell said a favorite episode of his and fellow cast members was one titled "The Interview," a black-and-white segment featuring documentary-style interviews with the characters by former real-life war correspondent Clete Roberts.

The show was hardly an overnight success. Premiering in September 1972 as America was still embroiled in Vietnam, "M*A*S*H" struggled in the ratings during its first season before catching on with viewers, lauded by critics and resonating with the anti-war sentiment of the time.

11 years

"M*A*S*H" ultimately ran for 11 years, far longer than the actual war. The last original episode, a 2 1/2-hour finale on Feb. 28, 1983, was a highly publicized national event that still holds the record for the biggest US audience ever to watch a single TV program.

Farrell said he doubts a show like "M*A*S*H" would make it today, though its success proves "the audience is a lot smarter than the average network executive gives them credit for." "It's also evidence of the fact that if a network believes in a show enough to give it a shot, and if it's a good show, the audience will ultimately come to it," he said. "You don't see too much of that today. It's all about ratings and egos." Fox is part of Fox Entertainment Corp., which is a unit of News Corp. Ltd., while CBS is now owned by Viacom Inc.

Reuters

'Your Dwelling Place' album showcases songs for spiritual healing

By Leia Torre

"YOUR Dwelling Place – Songs for Healing" is an album featuring the Himig Heswita and some of their friends. It is one of the albums produced by the Jesuit Music Ministry of the Jesuit Communications Foundation, Inc. Each collection has a goal of sorts, and "Your Dwelling Place," while containing songs that would greatly aid in mending broken hearts and broken faiths, goes much farther.

Intimate concert

This album is in fact a recording of the intimate concert given "one January dusk" by Himig Heswita and friends for those suffering from cancer and other other long-drawn illnesses. These people, however, are not the only ones who need such healing.

This album makes it possible for other people to benefit from these songs.

The album is composed of 16 selections which are subsequently grouped under three headings—"The World is God's Dwelling Place," "When God Seems Absent," and "We Are God's Dwelling Place."

There is only one song that has not been "classified," and this is "Prayer for Peace" by David Haas. This is the first song in the album – its "introit," so to speak. It is a very simple and yet effective song.

Five songs

The five songs under the first heading are "Awit ng Paghahangad" by Charlie Cenzon, SJ, "O Hesus, Hilumin Mo" by M.V. Francisco, SJ, "Prayer of Rupert Mayer" by M.V. Francisco, SJ, "Halina, Lumapit sa Akin" by Danilo B. Isidro and Nemesio S. Que, SJ, and "City of God" by Dan Schutte.

The four under the second heading are "Gabing Kulimlim" by J. Arboleda and M.V. Francisco, SJ, "If I Could Touch You" by M.V. Francisco, SJ, "Your Heart Today" by M.V. Francisco, SJ, and "How Shall I Sing to God?" by David Haas.

Those under the last heading are "How Lovely Is Your Dwelling Place" by Arnel dC. Aquino, SJ, "H'wag Kang Mangamba" by M.V. Francisco, SJ, "Like Cedars They Shall Stand" by Dan Schutte, "Ito Ang Araw" by Arnel dC. Aquino, SJ, "In My Heart" by M.V. Francisco, SJ, and "Hontiveros Medley" by E.P. Hontiveros, SJ.

This last number is the most familiar to the average churchgoer. It is composed of four songs: "Kahanga-Hanga," "Kaibigan, Kapanalig," "Sa Dapit-Hapon," and "Pananagutan," which have long been sung in masses all over the country.

Opportunity

The vocalists have endeavored to sing these songs the way they should be sung. It is hoped that church choirs avail themselves of the opportunity to be inspired to put some life into their interpretation of these songs.

Most of the other songs in the album that grab one's attention are those composed by M.V Francisco, SJ. The song "If I Could Touch You," for instance, combines the power of beautiful, meaningful lyrics and an unforgettable melody to create a song dedicated to Jesus Christ. It brings the listener face-to-face with everything the Son of God endured in order to save us.

What makes the song remarkable is that there are two viewpoints included in its lyrics. The first is that of the singer, and the second is that of Jesus. It is, first and foremost, a song of love.

Another M.V. Francisco song, "Your Heart Today," is a prayer asking God for help in making one's heart resemble His own. It is a song of hope. The vocalists do an excellent job in imbuing the song with true emotion.

Assurance

Another unforgettable M.V. Francisco composition is "H'wag Kang Mangamba." It is a song of assurance, emphasizing the truth that we are never alone in our daily struggles and triumphs.

Other songs are noteworthy in their own right. It is just that the songs we've cited are the ones that could have the most significant effect on Filipino listeners.

This may be because the other songs are not so culture-specific. Francisco's songs in Filipino, for example, may come across as more poignant because the Filipino language is more expressive. It has the ability of making church songs sound like *kundimans*. People from other cultures would no doubt have different preferences. Aside from the language, Franisco's songs often seem "custom-made" for Filipinos in that they are about things that we consider important.

The only accompaniment is that of the piano, played by Arnel dC. Aquino, SJ. It is a good choice, because the simplicity of the accompaniment allows the lyrics and melody to stand out. The piano is also a very flexible intrument—it can sound joyful, solemn, melancholic, – in fact, almost anything the pianist wants.

John Pratts wants to play roles different from his clean-cut image

By Edmund L. Sicam

JOHN Pratts has been in the business for the past 10 years, but he seems to be completely unaffected by show biz culture. For one thing, at the press conference for Hawk bags, which is where we were able to catch up with him recently, he was there 10 minutes before the appointed time. He has been the image model of the bag manufacturer for the past three years.

So what's keeping him busy these days? Well, he's doing TV shows for ABS-CBN, like "Whattamen" and "G-mik," and is starting to film a movie for Star Cinema titled "Jologs." So, is he replacing the late Rico Yan in "Whattamen?"

New character

"*Ay hindi, bagong* character *lang ako.*" He plays a *kanto* boy, a character very much against his clean-cut image and character on "G-mik," but he doesn't mind. As a matter of fact, he welcomes the chance to take on new roles and characters.

In "Jologs," he plays a young man about to enter college but doesn't have the money for it. He's extremely smart, but he doesn't make the cut, so he has to ask money from his father, who doesn't support him because he's an "*anak sa labas*."

"*Seryoso ako dito. May pagka*-geek, underacting..." John says. "Jologs" will actually be seven short stories in one movie, but they're all interconnected, AND the entire thing happens in one day. He stars with Diether Ocampo, Onemig Bondoc, Assunta di Rossi, Patrick Garcia and Baron Geisler.

Another thing about John that makes him different from other actors is the fact that he knows the value of acting workshops. "*Para maiba yung* character *ko* per movie, *di ba? Siniseryoso ko na ngayon. Dati, laro-laro lang.*" He runs to his "Tita Bevs" (Beverly Vergel) of Talent Center and asks for her help. She even teaches him how to let go of a character once the movie is done.

Usually, to help an actor get into the problems of a character, an actor must delve into his or her own experience. Unfortunately for John, he seems to be worry-free. Happy family, happy career... what's the worst thing that ever happened to him so far that he could use? "*Na*-left out *ako sa* 'Ang TV' at 'Kaybol.' *Nag*-pictorial *yung buong* cast, *nakalimutan ako! Umuwi na lang ako, ang sama ng loob ko noon!*"

Family support

John's quite fortunate. Teen years are typically marred by a lot of struggle, but he's handling it well. "Because of my family's support and advice," he says.

PRATTS. Unaffected by show biz culture.

It's usually difficult for former child stars to play older roles. How exactly did John handle the shift? He attributes it all to the Talent Center. When there's a script, they brainstorm about it first before it gets to him. They pretty much balance everything for him. For this, he is grateful.

"Because they help me, I help them, too. I take care of my image... *ang pagiging* role model *ko* is my way of thanking them. Batang Talent Center *kasi ako, e.* Also, family *kasi talaga sa* ABS, *e. Alaga.*"

And how about his love life? He is, after all, 18 years old already...is that something he wants to get into as well? "*Sana, pagdating ko ng* college, *meron na. Wala pa akong masyado nakikita. Ito ang mundo ko* (show biz), *hindi ako masyado lumalabas. Pagdating ng* college, *marami nang* chicks *doon, baka makahanap ako.*"

So the girlfriend will probably just have to wait. In the meantime, he's taking Business Administration and Information Technology in college. Why choose a course so un-related to show biz? He idolizes his father, who is a good businessman.

Show biz family

John isn't the only show biz personality in his family. There's his sister, Camille, and there was his *tita* before, Mia. Is there any conflict with his sister? Any professional jealousy? "*Wala. Hindi kami magkalaban. Kung may* show or fans day *siya, andoon ako* to support her. And she's there for me. *Sa* first drama *ko, siya yung nagturo sa akin.*"

TWO FOR THE SHOW

Ara Mina loves being wholesome

By Mary Ann A. Bautista and Ricky T. Gallardo

ARA Mina never thought that she would shed her clothes in her movies. During her stint in "That's Entertainment," she projected a sweet and wholesome image.

"Noong nasa 'That's' *ako, talagang kumakanta ako, sumasayaw, wala sa bokabolaryo ko ang magpa*-sexy. *Umalis ako sa* 'That's' *noong* 1995, *doon na ako nagpa*-sexy," Ara shares.

She did "Rollerboys" and "Super Ranger Kid" before her starring role in "Maldita." Though she bared and did delicate love scenes in "Kahapon May Dalawang Bata," "Sagad Sa Init" and "Phone Sex," she has no regrets because people notice her acting talent. These days she plays one of the *contravidas* in GMA-7's "Kung Mawawala Ka."

ARA. MINA. Plays a contravida in GMA soap.

Greyhoundz launches video

Greyhoundz has altered its sound to something new. It has been texturing its complex rap-metal sound with jazz, ethnic and reggae influences.

Its new album is about self-exploration and experimentation, which makes so their video of "Your Puppet and Clown" different. They got their video concept from the play "Waiting for Godot" and it highlights different characters.

The budget for the video was a whooping P400,000 but Greyhoundz isn't complaining. "Rico Gutierrez was our director. He interpreted the concept well. There was no clashing of ideas," Reg Rubio says.

Rosanna Roces' cameo appearance made the video shoot more enjoyable.

Borgees

They're young, hip and trendy. They're the Borgees Image Models, five wholesome individuals Oriental Merchants has tapped to promote Borges Olive oil.

They're Bridget, Regina, Marco, Leo and Raffy, survivors of a nationwide search that ad agency Caballero Worldwide Partners conducted for two grueling months.

ARA/ p. D5

Top directors to capture shocks of Sept. 11 in new motion picture

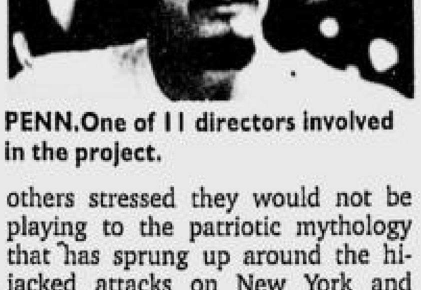
CANNES, France—Eleven top directors unveiled Monday a joint project for a series of short films about Sept. 11 to be shown on the first anniversary of the attacks on the United States.

Titled "11'09"01: Eleven Minutes, Nine Seconds, One Frame"—for the length of each segment symbolically fixed at the date of that fateful day—the project gathers 11 award-winning filmmakers from around the world.

They include US actor/director Sean Penn, Bosnian Oscar-winner Danis Tanovic, British Cannes veteran Ken Loach, and Bukino Faso's Idrissa Ouedraogo.

Resonance

"The idea is to have 11 minutes not only on the events themselves but also on the resonance of those events," French producer Jacques Perrin told a media conference on the sidelines of the Cannes Film Festival.



PENN. One of 11 directors involved in the project.

Loach, Penn and several of the others stressed they would not be playing to the patriotic mythology that has sprung up around the hijacked attacks on New York and Washington—and some only barely hid their contempt for US President George W. Bush's "war on terrorism" that followed as a result.

Loach said he would be "looking at the way the meaning of what happened on that day becomes hijacked, the same way the planes became hijacked." Penn said he was looking for "the window to be opened" on perspectives that did not rely on Hollywood cliches to define real-life events.

Good and evil

"We now have a president who thinks in terms of good and evil and that comes from watching too many Hollywood movies . . . (but) there is a more ambiguously greyer global world," he said.

"Now there's a time to criticize those movies—and there's a time to replace them," he said.

Young Iranian director Samira Makhmalbaf explained that she wanted to convey both sides of the coin.

She said she had spent time in both New York and in Afghanistan before Sept. 11 but felt that the tragedy on US soil attracted a disproportionate amount of attention given the devastation that has occurred, often almost unseen, for decades in other countries.

"11'09"01" will be released around the world on Sept. 11, 2002. AFP

Uniquely Filipino music shows on TV

By Nestor U. Torre

EVER since television came to the Philippines, music has been a staple of our programs. At first, this was a carry-over of US TV formats, local versions of musical or musical-comedy programs and specials topbilled by the likes of Kate Smith and Bing Crosby.

Not quite right

Thus, Philippine TV acquired shows spotlighting the musical talents of Dee Marquez, Pilita Corrales and Carmen Soriano. In time, however, producers realized that the personality-oriented program was not quite right for the local scene.

What made us unique as a musical nation was not that we had some great singers, but that most Filipinos could sing well, or at least loved to sing (even if singing didn't love them)!

Thus was born the "truly Filipino" musical show format that has become so popular on TV today: the sing-along program or game show that pits one "ordinary" singer against another. This format doesn't rely on a name singer, as shows like "Our Evening with Pilita" used to, but on non-star singers from all walks of life.

Their love for singing and vast amateur experience in videoke clubs has prepared hem to compete in terms of singing ability and pop-musical knowledge, on national TV.

Programs like "K, the Videoke Challenge" and "Sing Galing" have pioneered in this regard, and have become so popular that the noontime shows on TV are now running their own videoke competitions.

The traditional "Tawag ng Tanghalan" televised search for singers has also been modified to the less basic and better-staged "Star For A Night." Kiddie talent competitions can still be found on our noontime shows. And dance-oriented programs like "Dancetime with Chito" have been updated and given bigger, brasher production values.

But the key change has been the reliance, not on a few stars, but on a host of unknowns who can give the singing stars a run for their money and trophies.

"K" host Arnell Ignacio.

Grand finals

Some years back, we were asked to judge the grand finals of a name sing-along club, and we were amazed when we heard the finalists perform. These were ordinary office workers and students, and yet their voices and singing styles were of professional caliber.

Another time, we conducted auditions for some new musicals we were directing, and we were similarly blown away by the high level of singing turned in by the auditionees, many of whom had honed their skills in the numerous videoke clubs that have mushroomed all over Metro Manila.

Dancing ability

In fact, musical talent has become so common in these parts that it takes a really outstanding singer to make it even to the chorus of musical productions. As for dancing ability, some talent searches don't audition for it anymore, presuming that most of the singing auditionees can also dance well.

Given this plethora of musical talents, local TV has made the right move in coming up with shows that don't showcase star singers but make so-called amateur (but actually semi-pro) talents compete with each other on point of performance and musical knowledge.

They tap into a seemingly inexhaustible musical motherlode of innate talent that many people here are blessed with, and are all too eager to put to the test and share with the listening and viewing public.

Ara Mina loves . . .

From p. D4

What do they like about endorsing a food product instead of a beauty product?

"Promoting Borges Olive oil will help people become more aware of their health. With Borges cooking oil, you can enjoy good food without sacrificing the taste," Regina states.

Cherry Pie Picache celebrates birthday and motherhood

On Monday, it'll be Cherry Pie Picache's first time to celebrate her birthday as a mother. Picache gave birth recently to a baby boy whom she named Jose Antonio, after the two favorite patron saints of the actress, Joseph and Anthony.

She has played mom onscreen countless times but this is an entirely different "role" for the talented actress as she personally looks after every need of her baby.

The last time we caught Picache on screen was in "American Adobo" (although she also had a small role in "Got 2 Believe"). Some people are saying that "Adobo" might just give Picache the best actress award which has been eluding her for so long.

Beauty title drought

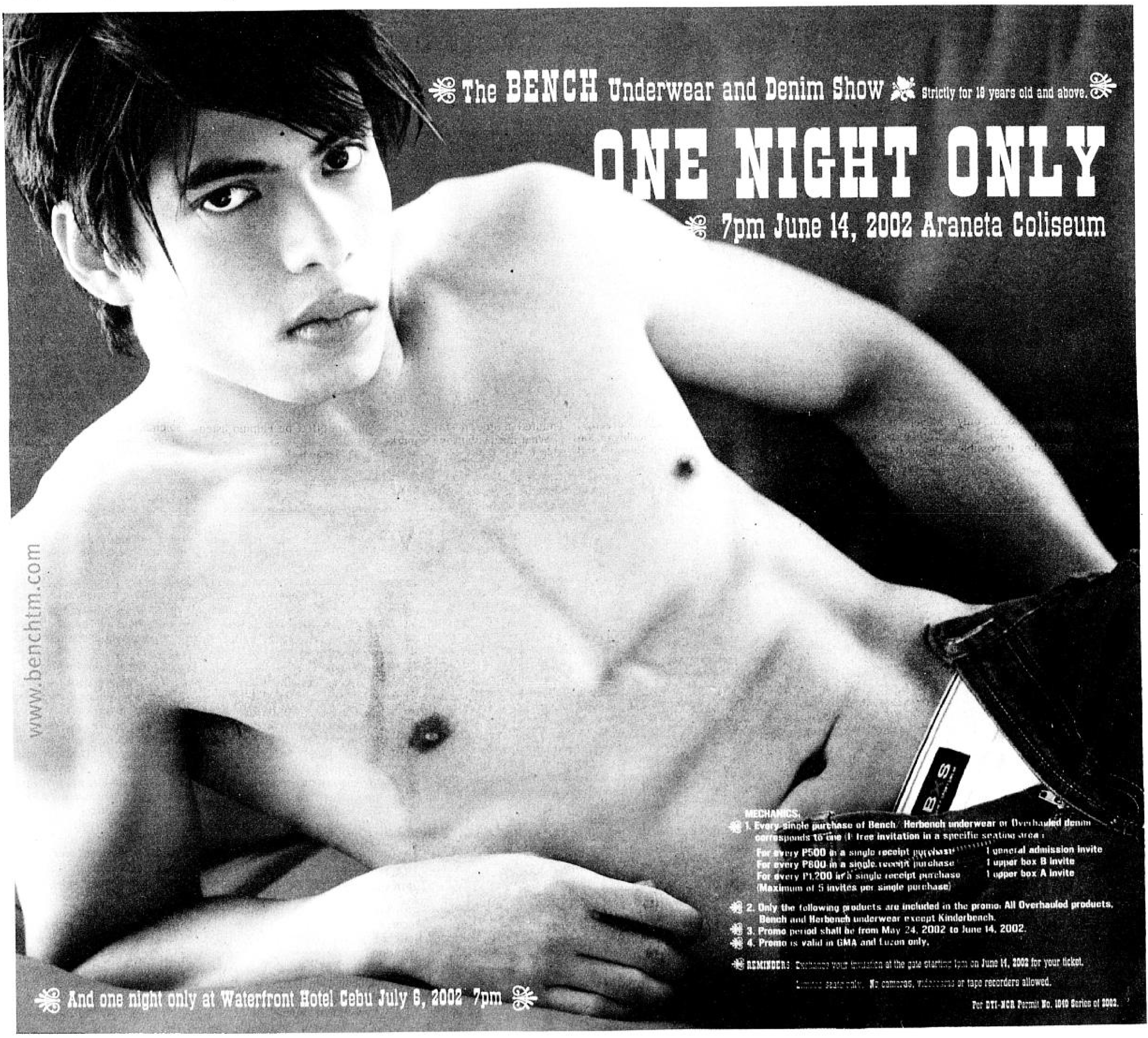
It's been ages since the Philippines last won a major world-class beauty title, and we're certainly not referring to second-rate contests which have mushroomed through the years.

Our last Miss Universe was Margarita Moran, who was crowned in Greece in 1973. Our last Miss International was Melanie Marquez who won in Japan despite faking her real age in 1979. We don't even have a Miss World to date.

Something must be wrong somewhere in the selection of representatives to these major beauty contests.

We can't say that there is a double standard specially as far as physical features like height and beauty of face are concerned. Why do the Miss Indias, who are not really tall and svelte and fair, impress the judges year after year?

Something must be done to overhaul the system for choosing our bets to these prestigious pageants, for our country to have a better chance of winning again.



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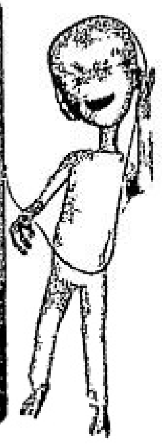

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Scorsese stuns Cannes with 20-minute 'Gangs' viewing

By Luke Baker

CANNES, France—Director Martin Scorsese stunned a star-studded audience at the Cannes film festival on Monday with a powerful 20-minute special preview of his eagerly awaited epic "Gangs of New York."

Stars

Leonardo DiCaprio and Cameron Diaz, stars of the picture, jetted into the French Riviera resort for the one-off screening and were greeted by a sea of screaming teenage fans as they made their way up the famous Cannes red carpet.

Paparazzi in tuxedos sweated away in the evening sunshine trying to get the best shot of the two glamorous stars.

Inside the movie theater, DiCaprio leapt to his feet and led a standing ovation for Scorsese before the director of classic movies such as "Raging Bull" and "Taxi Driver" introduced what he has called his "biggest-ever undertaking." "This movie has been in my mind and in my heart since I was 10 years old and growing up in downtown New York," the director told a packed audience which included Sharon Stone and Juliette Binoche.

"Ultimately this film asks the question 'What is America and what does it mean to be an American?'" he said, after launching the evening with a retrospective on his Hollywood hero, the late Billy Wilder.

Emotional

At a party after the screening, DiCaprio was emotional about its impact on the audience.

"My palms were sweaty at first, but by the end of the 20 minutes I was getting chills," DiCaprio told Reuters.

"It's like a dream come true for me, as it would be for any actor, to work in a Martin Scorsese epic and have people see just 20 minutes of it and yet get titillated and excited," he added.

Set in the cobbled streets of downtown New York in 1846-63, "Gangs of New York" tells the story of a young immigrant Irishman (DiCaprio) who sets out to avenge his father's murder.

With Daniel Day-Lewis playing a gangland boss, Cameron Diaz as a seductive pickpocket and Oscar-winner Jim Broadbent also featuring, it boasts an all-star cast. The budget is reported to have run to almost 100 million.

"Gangs" was originally set to be in cinemas last December, but the painstaking filming, shot mostly at Cinecitta studios in Rome, ran into delays and there have been rumors of a falling out between Scorsese and Miramax studio boss Harvey Weinstein.

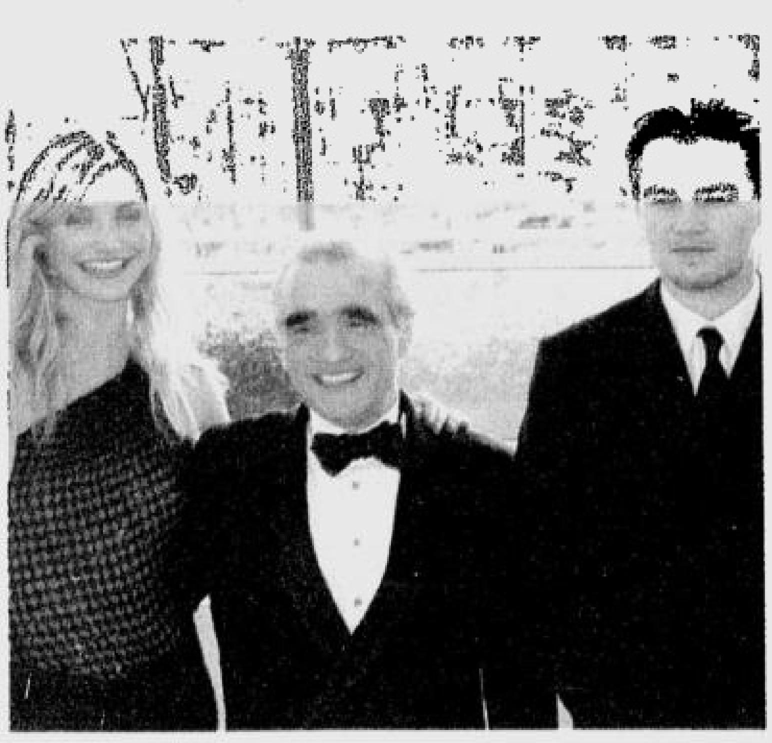
Pre-Oscars slot

Both have been quick to scotch that talk and the movie is now set for release on Christmas Day—a key pre-Oscars slot which commentators say is an indication of the huge backing Miramax is giving to what it hopes will be a blockbuster.

Miramax's decision to put on the extended preview of the film follows the success of the stunt with "Lord of the Rings." A tantalizing 20-minute clip of Frodo, Bilbo and the search for the ring generated massive media acclaim at Cannes last year and the movie went on to be one of the highest-grossing of all time.

And if the numbers from "Lord of the Rings" are anything to go by—it recouped more than half its $110 million budget the first weekend it opened in the States—the winning screening could reap huge benefits for Scorsese and "Gangs." *Reuters*

SCORSESE. Standing ovation.



THE DIRECTOR, center, with lead stars Cameron Diaz and Leonardo DiCaprio.

When all hell breaks loose

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

STOP asking why, because life's really like that. No matter how well we manage our affairs, despite the meticulous care we put into planning and organizing and coordinating and systematizing everything, even if we have anticipated all that can go wrong and come up with contingency measures for each one of them, things can still turn bad, matters can still get out of hand, all hell can still break loose!

Bimbo

I mean, you give all to your marriage, doing for your man things you never dreamt you could stoop so low to do—but the guy can still wake up one morning and decide to find a younger bimbo with bigger breasts.

Or, you try your best to be a good mom, balancing family and career like you were a juggler doubling up as a high-wire acrobat, reading up on values formation and capacity building and contemporary parenting techniques—but your kids can still turn out like monsters from a mad scientist's lab.

Or, you scrounge and scrimp on everything, making sure every basic need of your family is provided for, tightening the money belt like your life depended on it (because it does)—but something terrible happens and your budget flies through the roof and you come face-to-face with despair over the frightful prospect of instant destitution and penury.

Tragedy

Or, all's fine with your world, everything's turning out even better than your best expectations, you have the best that life can offer—but tragedy of cataclysmic proportions strikes, and you are down on your knees, paralyzed by grief, totally crippled by sorrow and anguish, and there's immeasurable pain throbbing in that place in your chest where your heart used to be.

Call them trials, adversities, tribulations, challenges, persecutions, oppressions, or plain, old hard times. There are moments when we take them all in stride, philosophizing that, when the going gets tough, the tough gets going. And we smile through the pain, imagining ourselves as some kind of Wonder Woman with magical wristbands that repel bullets and other assaults from evil elements.

But then, there are also times when things get too heavy for us to bear, and our mind, heart, body and soul conspire to convince us that the best way to go is to just quit—or grab a hammer and bang our head hard till we fall unconscious. These are the times when nothing seems to go right. Like, something snaps and everything just won't go our way. We cry, and cry. We continue to cry even when there are no more tears, just wordless convulsions of a gazillion pains.

In times like these, you can choose to wallow, make a big mess of yourself and drown in a bottomless pit of pity. But then, deep within you, you know that's the worst place for you to be. When you allow gloom to visit your heart, it will make a home there and, before you know it, it has already eaten the whole of you, and you become a festering boil ready to explode at the gentlest touch.

Best choice

Actually, the best choice we can make is to immediately take hold of ourselves, breathe deeply, relax and remember the following:

1. **Everything will come to pass.** Whatever happens, it's not the end of the world. We just need to hold on, be strong and steadfast, and simply wait for the storm to pass. Sometimes, we don't even have to do anything. Just make sure that we are together. We should not scatter pieces of ourselves around. We should not break into a million shards.

While we're at it, it would be helpful if we could list down in our minds the many difficulties that have already beset our life, and how they actually made us tougher than ever before. Recall that during the times when the trials had been at their deepest and most painful, we wanted to just quit and end it all—but we didn't, and we emerged victorious. What doesn't kill us only makes us stronger!

2. We're made of sterner stuff. We must dust off our ancestors' stories of bravery, boldness and heroism handed down from generation to generation. We start with our mom and dad. We recall the tales they pounded into our heads when we were young—how they suffered but forebore and mastered the game of life.

Courage

Today, we are amazed at their forebearance, courage, discipline, patience and tenacity of spirit, and we know that we are made from the same stock—we have it in us to also rise up to the challenges of our days, as they had of theirs.

We have to be aware that our history is drenched by the blood of heroes who walked the same earth we now tread. Some of them may have done great, wonderful deeds for our country and people, and others may not, but this doesn't really matter—they are all heroes because they triumphed over the ordinary and the not so ordinary day-to-day adversities of their lives.

And, most importantly for us now, they have invested in our veins the very same values they had used in their own battles, and which we may now summon to slay our own dragons.

3. There is God who loves us. Sometimes, God allows terrible things to happen to us just so we realize our utter helplessness and nothingness, and rediscover His immense, limitless love for us. This may seem like a contradiction, an oxymoron—but it isn't.

Good God

For one, our God is a good God. He does not allow hardships in order to punish us or to put us to the test. He is the first to know how weak and sinful we are, but His love for us is greater than our greatest weakness and most grievous sin.

For another, no matter how dreadful the sudden turn of our circumstances, God is in control—He truly is. And He will not allow to happen to us any adversity that is beyond our capacity to handle. Besides, even if we fall as we often do, we just reach out to Him and He's there—to hold our hand as we struggle, and even to carry us, if necessary.

But, you ask, why does He allow tragedy to happen at all? If He so loves us, why doesn't He simply ensure that we go through life in blissful comfort? Questions like this remind us of the parable of the rock:

There was this man who was roused from sleep and ordered by God to push a big rock outside his house. The man did as the Lord commanded. He pushed the rock with all his strength. Alas! The rock wouldn't move even a fraction of an inch.

Despondent

After more than a year of pushing but not moving the rock, he grew tired and weary, even despondent. He went back to God and said he didn't want to push the rock anymore. "Why?" the Lord asked. "Because it won't move," he spat out.

"But I told you to just push it. I didn't tell you to move it. You weren't supposed to move it. It is I who will do so." And the Lord moved the rock.

"But why did you ask me to push it if you didn't want me to move it in the first place?" the man persisted. "Because it was the only way for me to strengthen you," the Lord answered. "You thought your efforts were in vain because you weren't able to move the rock. But look, your shoulders have hardened, your back has broadened, and your muscles have become bigger, your sinews stronger, your hands tougher."

Indeed, when all hell breaks loose, we should recognize it as a fortifying process. Only in times like this do we learn humility, patience, forebearance, courage and Faith. Only then do we see God as He truly is!

MAGDANGAL. Not a prima donna.

LAZARO. Courageous adventure-seeker.

Female stars as role models

By Noelani Torre

WE may admire them for their looks, fame, and glamorous life and wealth, but we don't often view celebrities as people to emulate. Stars get involved in scandals whose sordid details are plastered all over the papers, their indiscretions are discussed at the breakfast table, and their morals are regularly questioned, and on national television, at that.

Respect

Still, some stars are not just all shine and no substance. There are some who lead lives that don't stray from the straight and narrow, and who are worthy not only of our admiration but also of our respect. Some stars can even serve as role models.

Who are they? Given that female stars are more vigilantly watched than their male counterparts, we asked several young women who they thought was the star who could serve as a role model for them and for others. Their choices are:

Sunshine-y

"Jolina Magdangal. I have a reliable source at ABS-CBN who tells me *na sobrang bait daw niya* despite the fact *na sobrang sikat na siya. Walang* prima donna attitude. She's the sort of person who manages to smile even when things aren't so good anymore. Very sunshine-y.

"*Gusto ko rin yung* fact *na hindi siya* confined *sa* show biz. *Marami pa siyang ibang* fields *na ine*-explore, *gaya ng* business *at* merchandising. *Meron siyang* Jolina Enterprises, *di ba? Yung* string of boutiques *na nagbebenta ng mga* fashion creations niya.

"So, *kumikita na siya* sa show biz, and at the same time *meron pa siyang* fall-back in case *hindi na siya magiging masyadong sikat* in the future."*–Mariana Miranda, 17*

Professional attitude

"Lea Salonga. I admire her very professional attitude. I heard that she's always very punctual when she has appointments, etc. Of course, we all know the extent of her achievements in music and theater. She's also very disciplined and focused. She has goals.

"Her name hasn't been linked to any degrading controversies either, unlike other stars.' I also hear that she loves her family, especially her mother. She always prioritizes them. If every Filipina would look up to her, *siguro uunlad ang Pilipinas."- Azir Lo, 19*

Character

"Che-che Lazaro. She's not exactly a star, but she's famous. I believe that the high quality of her program 'The Probe Team' is a reflection of her own character. This isn't a show that is satisfied with the usual food/travel/fashion features. They sometimes tackle 'dangerous' topics and I admire Che-che's courage for making those daring exposes.

"She's an adventure-seeker. She's not satisfied with just sitting and reading the news like the usual newscaster. She's not an armchair critic. She really goes out there.

"I believe her show is important because it's informative, but not in a straight news-reporting way. It's more interesting and we get to know about the unknown places and people of the Philippines."*- Natalie Dominguez, 21*

Perseverance

"Regine Velasquez. *Galing siya sa mahirap, di ba? Gusto ko yung* persistence *niya sa pag-abot ng* goal *niya. Grabe yung* training *na in*-undergo *niya.* I admire her perseverance. *Disiplinado talaga siya, at ang laki ng pagmamahal niya sa pamilya niya. Inuuna niya sila bago ang sarili.*

"*Tsaka siyempre maganda ang* performance *niya,* both as singer and actress. *Wala ding masyadong tsismis tungkol sa kanya, at kung meron man mababaw lang."- Tonilanne Baco, 18*

Universal themes

"Barbie Almalbis of 'Barbie's Cradle.' Because she is a practicing Christian. She's a rock star but she doesn't do drugs or booze. *Walang siyang bisyo at mabait pa siya.* I also like their music. She writes good songs with universal themes.

"There's no sordid talk about her. She has a clean name and I haven't heard of any bad business between her and other stars of their industry. She has a calm disposition and she's very levelheaded. *At kasi nga Kristiyano siya, meron siyang pananalig."- Pauline Morales, 17*

'Godfather' producer finally makes it to Cannes

By Joelle Diderich

ANTIBES, France—Robert Evans, legendary producer of "The Godfather" and "Chinatown," waited 45 years to pitch a movie at Cannes and even a 104-degree fever wasn't going to keep him away.

"The doctor said to me: 'You're going to Cannes over my dead body.' Well, he might be dead, but I'm here in Cannes," Evans told Reuters in an interview on Monday.

Documentary version

The former production head of Paramount Pictures was at the world's most famous film festival to present "The Kid Stays in the Picture," the documentary version of his rollercoaster autobiography.

"It's the biggest night of my life in a way," he said in a gravelly drawl at his hotel room at the plush Eden Roc overlooking the Mediterranean sea.

"This is the first time since 1957 that anything I've done—I've done over 300 films, one way or another—is put in Cannes, and I just wasn't going to miss it." Evans almost failed to make it. Having missed a flight due to a fever, he hitched a ride on the private jet of close pal Jack Nicholson.

No reunion

Another good friend, Roman Polanski, is due in town, but there will be no reunion for the triumvirate who respectively produced, starred in and directed "Chinatown" in 1974.

Evans has to fly back to Los Angeles to leave his prints in wet cement at Graumann's Chinese Theater—right next to Nicholson's.

The producer, now over 70 and still recovering from a multiple stroke four years ago that left him temporarily paralyzed [illegible] fine mood as he rattled away in the style of a hard-boiled character from a 1950s film noir.

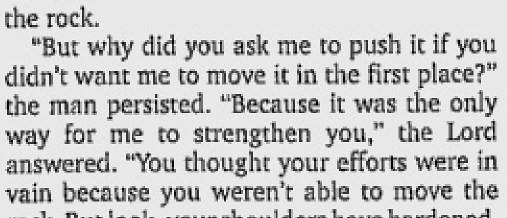
"I hope my life tells a story that inspires others," he said of the documentary, which charts his rise from child actor to movie honcho and his fall from grace after he was implicated in a cocaine bust.

At the height of his fame, Evans was Hollywood royalty, married to Ali McGraw, then the most bankable female star in the world thanks to "Love Story," and green-lighting classics from "Rosemary's Baby" to "Harold and Maude."

"It's not a documentary . . . It's one bumpy road. It's a story not even about survival, it's about winning. It's a story about scandal, sex, getting knocked down and getting up again," he said.

Dressed in a cream satin shirt and linen pants, the tanned Evans still looks like a player and talks like a player, but he has had only modest hits since his comeback in the early 1990s.

These include "Sliver," with Sharon Stone and William Baldwin, and "The Saint" starring Val Kilmer.



EVANS was once married to Ali McGraw, left, who eventually spurned him for Steve Mc Queen, right.

"Most of the pictures I've made have been mediocre the last 15-20 years because we work in committee," he said.

"I had total autonomy when I ran the studio. I could do whatever I wanted, there were no committees. Now I don't take a piss when I want, I gotta ask permission," he added.

Inflated cost

Evans believes the inflated cost of filmmaking today has sapped the industry's creativity. "I couldn't get 'The Godfather' made today," he said.

Despite all the awards he stacked up, Evans is still bitter about how the industry shunned him after he was implicated in a cocaine deal that turned out to be a trap. *Reuters*

For 'Full Monty' star, small is big

By Paul Majendie

CANNES, France—For James Bond villain Robert Carlyle, small is big. He is much happier playing the loveable rogue in a low-budget British spaghetti western.

Charismatic

"The bigger the budget, the less it is about," said the charismatic Scottish actor who joined the pantheon of Hollywood bad guys when playing the villain in the Bond blockbuster "The World Is Not Enough." But his career really took off when he led a team of amateur strippers in "The Full Monty," a small-budget movie that became one of the biggest success stories in British film history.

"I just feel personally easier in a low-budget world," he told Reuters Television in Cannes, basking in the acclaim showered at the world's most famous film festival on "Once Upon A Time In The Midlands," a riotous tale of two men battling for the love of the same woman.

Carlyle seems less at ease with the multi-million dollar film.

FOR/ p. D7

For Monty . . .

From p. D6

"People don't go and see big budget blockbusters for the story. You go and see them for the effects, the explosions and stuff like that. That's absolutely cool and that's entertainment. People who want that and like that will pay the money," he said.

Acclaim

Carlyle, who first won acclaim in Britain for his portrayal of a foul-mouthed sociopath in "Trainspotting," preferred the production to be low-key. "I just think I can develop more character and I can perform at a much better level," he said.

And Carlyle, who also starred in "Angela's Ashes" and "The Beach" with Leonardo DiCaprio, is clearly a perfectionist who would happily take several stabs at a scene to get it right.

Carlyle, who founded his own theater company in Britain and has been garlanded with awards for his television roles, says there is a huge difference between working on a Bond spectacular and a film shot by British director Ken Loach. *Reuters*

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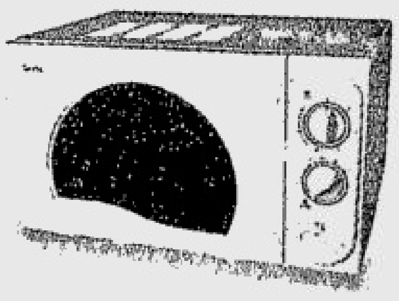

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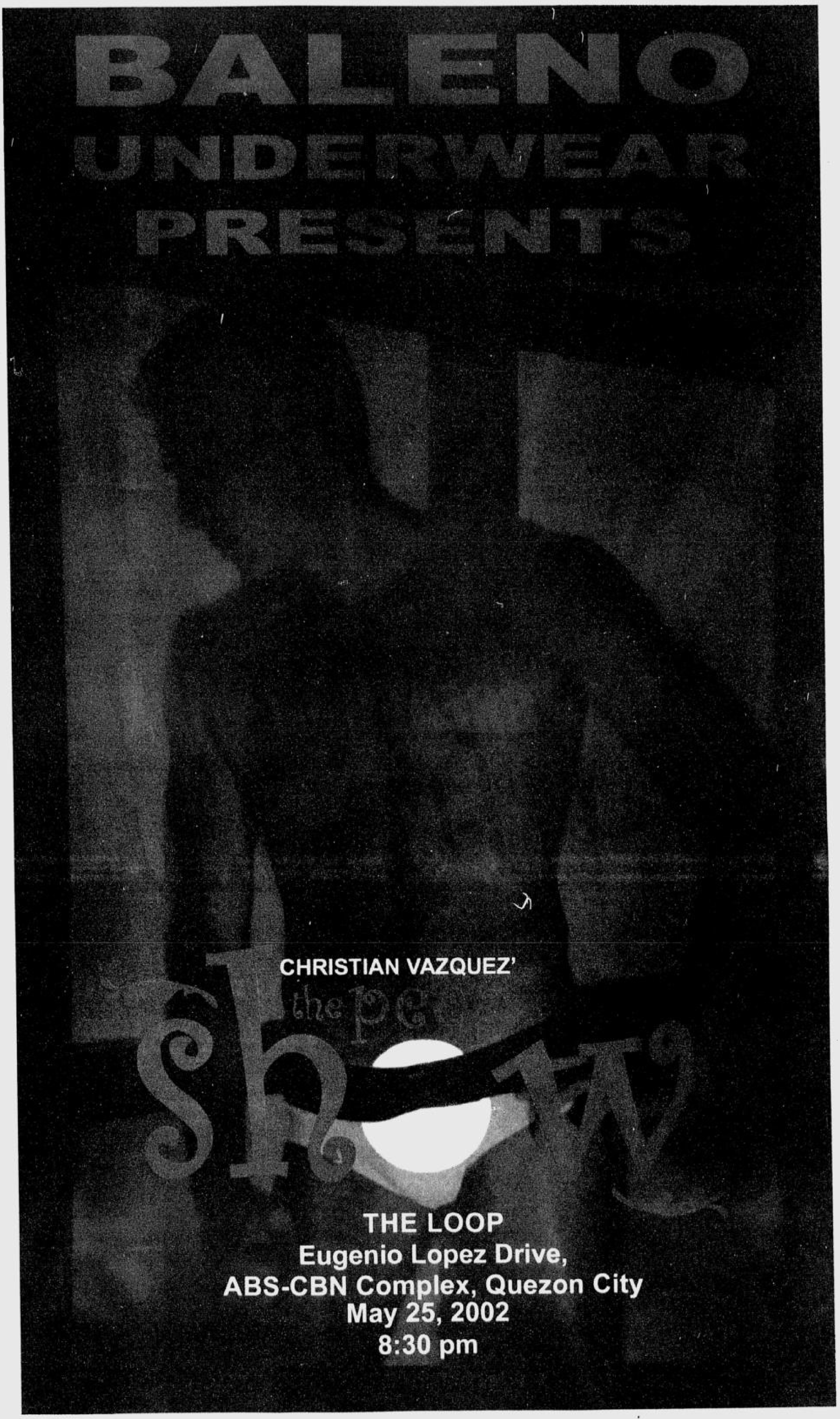

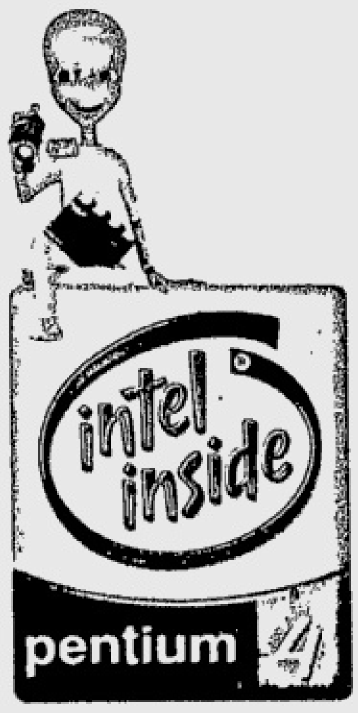

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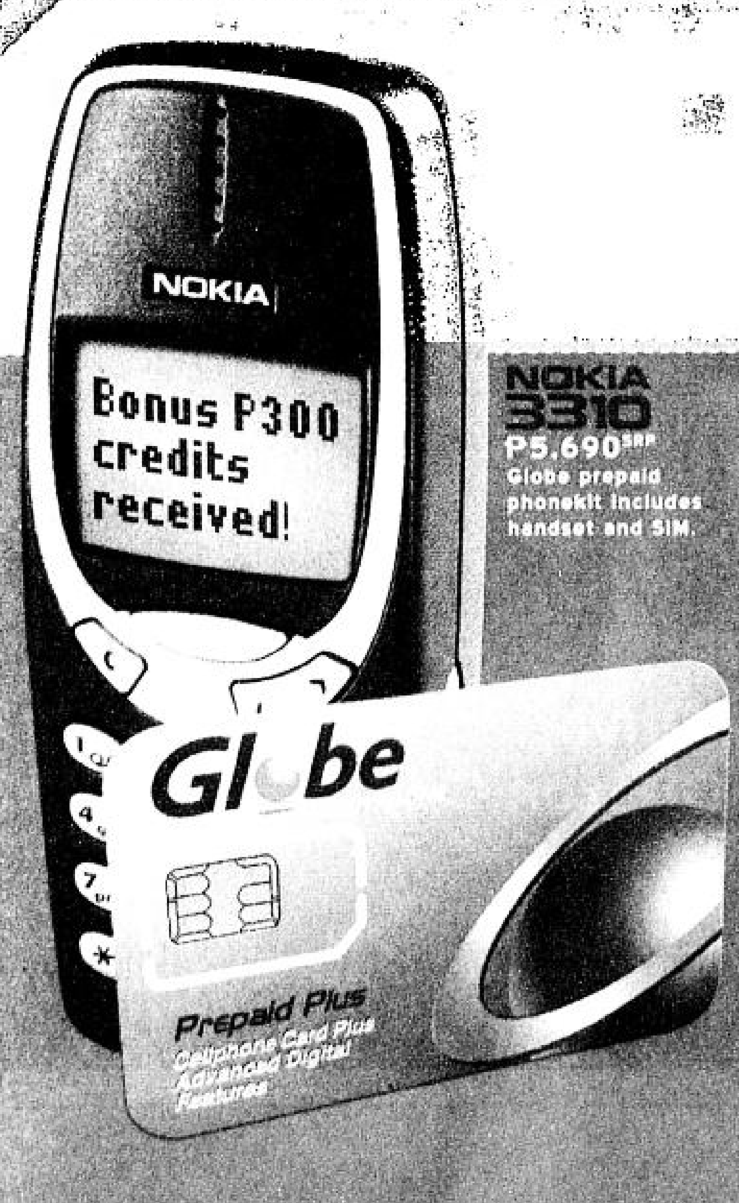

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SATURDAY*Special*

Brosnan not yet ready to surrender James Bond crown

By Paul Majendie

BROSNAN. Hard-headed realist.

CANNES, France—Pierce Brosnan is not ready to surrender his crown quite yet—he wants to make another James Bond movie.

"Number Five still appeals," he told Reuters Television on Saturday after flying into the Cannes film festival for a spectacular party night to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the world's most successful spy films.

Brosnan, dubbed Billion Dollar Bond by the production company after the box office success of his first three Bond movies, is currently filming his fourth—"Die Another Day"—with Oscar winner Halle Berry.

Perennial appeal

"Would I do another one? I'd do another one, yes," said the actor who has so enthusiastically stepped into the role first filled back in 1962 by elegant ladykiller Sean Connery in "Dr No." Asked to sum up the perennial appeal of Bond, the Irish actor said: "It's the women, the gadgets, the sex, the romance, the fantasy world, the ultimate hero." More than half the world's population has seen a James Bond movie and Brosnan, who has been celebrating his 50th birthday this week, is phlegmatic about having of one of the most recognizable faces on the planet.

Exclusive hotel

"It is an interesting character to live with because he precedes you wherever you go in the world. You are internationally known. It makes travelling very easy," he said, gazing out at the Mediterranean from an exclusive hotel in Cap d'Antibes. The elegant setting would not be out of place in a Bond movie.

Playing the role has never been a burden for Brosnan. "I will always be known as one of the Bonds. So you make peace with that and I'm very proud of it," he said.

"As an actor, to go on and burst through that—that is the challenge. How do you redefine yourself having taken on this mantle of a character. That one can mess with your head sometimes." But by setting up his own production company and branching out on his own, Brosnan has avoided the danger of forever being typecast as Bond. That is why he is still clearly at ease with the role even if "there are guys out there chomping at the bit" to step into his shoes.

Infectious enthusiasm

In his infectious enthusiasm for all things Bond, Brosnan said: "You have to give 100 percent every time whether it's your first time or your fourth." And Brosnan, who is celebrating the 40th anniversary in style on Saturday night at the world's most famous film festival, is a hard-headed realist about how tough it is to keep the role fresh.

"It is a lot different from the days of 'Dr. No' and Sean Connery. Those (Ian Fleming) books were written for adults and those movies were made for adults. These films have changed somewhat but yet it's the same. The audience is even wider and the competition is even greater."

Reuters

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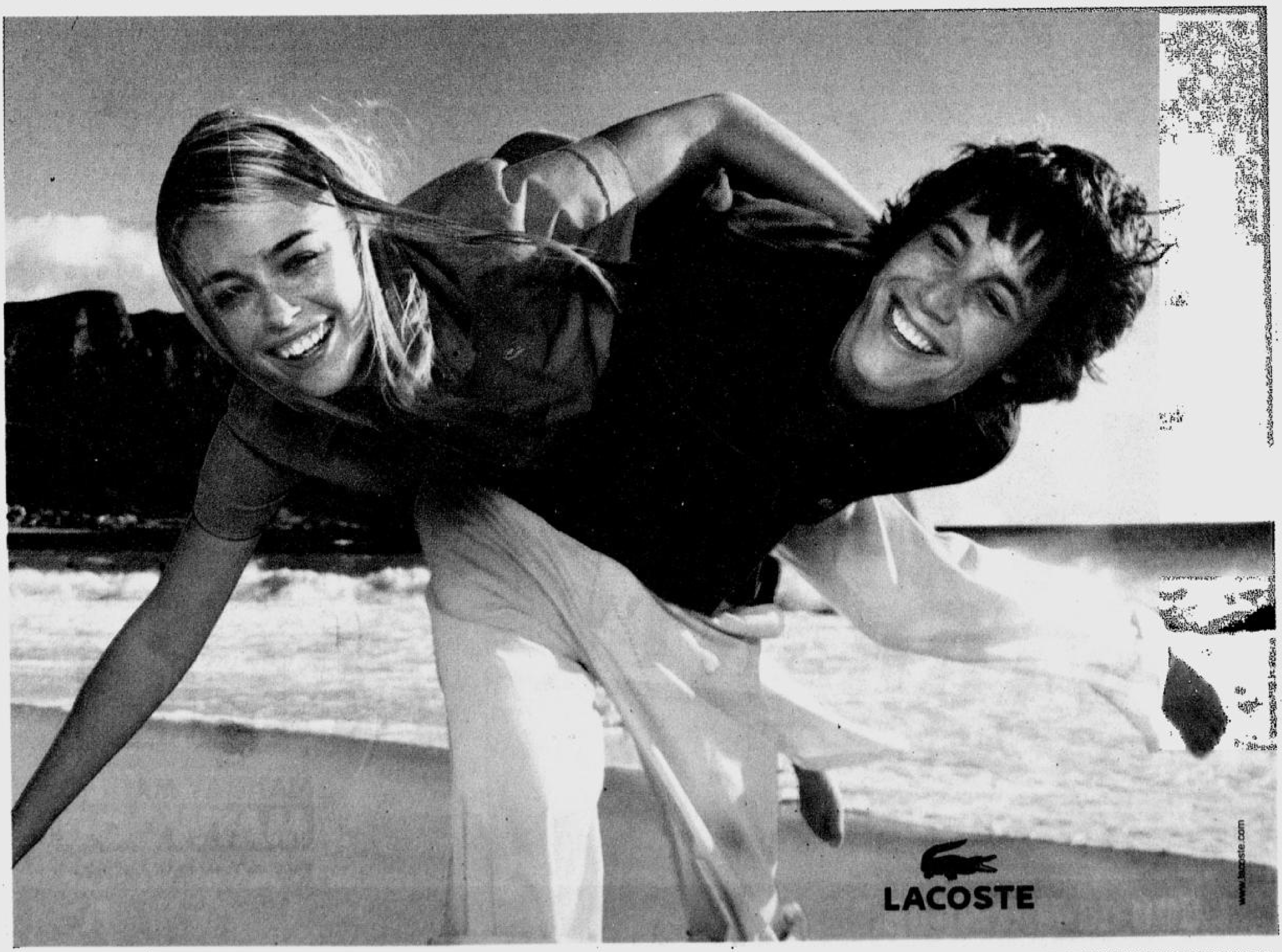

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YEOH. Loves controversy.

Asia's kung-fu queen tries her hand at film production

By Luke Baker

CANNES, France—Asian martial arts star Michelle Yeoh, heroine of "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," dispatches assailants with kung-fu kicks in her films and says she can handle any punches thrown by dissenting viewers.

Thankless honor

The Malaysian-born actress is judging at the Cannes film festival this year, often a thankless honor, with jury members slammed in the past for their selection of the coveted Palme d'Or winner, a prize which can make or break a movie.

"That is always how it is and that is part of the magic of film-making," Yeoh, who also played James Bond's girl in "Tomorrow Never Dies," told the BBC in an interview hours ahead of the official opening of the festival on Wednesday.

"Everybody has a different opinion, everybody wants to see more of this or less of that, everybody has a favorite, and that is what makes it special . . . I love a little bit of controversy, it makes life a bit more interesting." As well as sitting on the jury at this year's Cannes festival, Yeoh has recently set up her own production company and is producing and starring in "The Touch," an action adventure set in China in which she plays a trapeze artist.

Ballet dancer

Yeoh, 39, started out as a ballet dancer before winning the Miss Malaysia beauty contest in 1983 and then getting a start in film, acting in a commercial with action hero Jackie Chan.

After appearing in a slew of largely forgettable kung-fu flicks, she doubled up with Chan again in 1992 to make "Police Story 3: Supercop," which became an unexpected hit in the United States and won her a name.

Performing her own stunts and working in the gym up to nine hours a day to learn her amazing martial arts manoeuvres, she has become Asia's highest-paid actress. She has also been chosen by People magazine as one of the 50 most beautiful people in the world.

The role of Wai-Lin, the motorbike racing, stunt-performing love interest in "Tomorrow Never Dies" and a more dense acting performance in "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" secured her international reputation.

With "Crouching Tiger" the winner of four Academy Awards in 2001 and Asian films evidently in vogue, Yeoh turned her hand to other endeavors, setting up Mythical Films, a production company designed to nurture Chinese film talent.

Growing market

Asian film is a growing market, not just among audiences in the region but internationally, and Yeoh is hoping her company can catch a similar wave to that which helped India's Bollywood industry go global.

"'The Touch' has spectacular, incredible locations and English dialogue and so it should have global appeal," Yeoh said. "We're talking (to distributors) at Cannes and we're hopeful that it's going to have a big impact."

Reuters

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKSHELF

Rex Reed, king of celebrity interviewers, spares no one's feelings

By Noelani Torre

WE first heard about Rex Reed a few years back when he was apprehended for allegedly shop-lifting three compact discs from a Tower Records store. (We never did find out whether the charges were dropped, though it's unlikely that a man who lives in "one of Manhattan's most expensive and exclusive apartment buildings" couldn't afford to pay for those items.) We never really appreciated him, however, until we read his book "People Are Crazy Here," a collection of interviews with such celebrities as George C. Scott, Marcello Mastroianni, Tennessee Williams, Bette Midler, Doris Day, Jacqueline Susann, Alfred Hitchcock, Roger Moore, Jack Nicholson, Michael Caine, and Sir Laurence Olivier.

No surprise

Rex Reed is one of the best fly-on-the-wall narrators we've ever read. His interviews—sharply candid and wonderfully descriptiv—are in themselves sometimes more interesting than his subjects themselves. It didn't come as a surprise to us when we later found out that he is known to be the king of celebrity interviewers.

Take his vivid description of Tennessee Williams at dinner:

WOODWARD. Easy to please.

"He is eating Oysters Rockefeller and sipping cold white wine and talking about life. If a swamp alligator could talk, he would sound like Tennessee Williams. His tongue seems coated with rum and molasses as it darts in and out of his mouth, licking at his moustache like a pink lizard.

"His voice wavers unsteadily like old, gray cigar smoke in a room with no ventilation, rising to a mad cackle like a wounded macaw, settling finally in a cross somewhere between Tallulah Bankhead and Everett Dirksen. His hands flutter like dying birds in an abandoned aviary. Tragic flamboyance masks tortured sensitivity."

Flair

It's almost poetic. Reed also has a flair for recording and using his subjects' dialogue. In the same interview, he records Tennessee relating his latest bizarre illness: "I've had almost nothing but illness, I, yuh, don't know which one is the most recent. I did have an operation in Bangkok for breast cancer. When I consulted my heart surgeon, Dr. George Burch, here in New Orleans last summer, in the course of the examination he noticed a slight swelling in the location of the left mammary gland....

"Well, when I arrived in Bangkok, the receptionist at the Hotel Oriental called me half an hour after I checked in and said there are a few reporters who would like to say hello to you. I went downstairs and they were passing out martinis to everyone, so I joined in...heheheh...and there was a hush and one of them spoke up and said, 'Mr. Williams, is it true you have come to Bangkok to die?' ...hehhehheh...yah!..."

Reed doesn't just tell us, he takes us there. He notices everything about his subjects--their clothes, mannerisms, surroundings, how they act towards other people, etc. Sometimes it seems as though they are more alive on the page—his page—than in real life.

Button

"The first thing she did," he recounts in his piece on Doris Day, "was present me with a button from her purse that said 'Dogs Are Human Too.' I thanked her. 'It costs a buck,' she winked. I paid her the dollar and we were off....

"She's saving the animals so she can sleep nights. She likes animals better than most people and is devoting her life to their cause. Go ahead and smile. The girl really means it."

He began the article with a striking description of the star ("Doris Day sprang into the Brown Derby for breakfast like a daisy looking for a spring bouquet to get lost in.") and ends it with a statement that can be taken in any way ("I left, feeling as though I was having a milkshake hangover.").

Reed makes no secret about what he likes and what he doesn't. In his review of the stage version of "Gone with the Wind," amusingly entitled "Gone With the Wind Hits the Stage," he had this to say: "Certainly I can remember nothing in my theatergoing history I consider a bigger disaster.

"Champagne flowed freely in all the bars, flashbulbs popped and Noel Coward said it was a return to the fabulous old days of Drury Lane, when Ivor Novello sank a ship onstage. 'Gone With the Wind' sank, too, like the Hindenburg."

Sharp edge

When he likes something or someone, his famous "mean pen" turns complimentary but maintains its sharp edge. Of Joanne Woodward, he writes:

"In a stark and terrifying period in movie history, when practically everybody I meet seems to be feuding with somebody else, suing somebody else, or being just plain neurotic and confused, it is a genuine pleasure to take Joanne Woodward to lunch. Of all the movie stars I know, she is one of the least affected, least paranoid, and easiest to take. God knows she's easy to please."

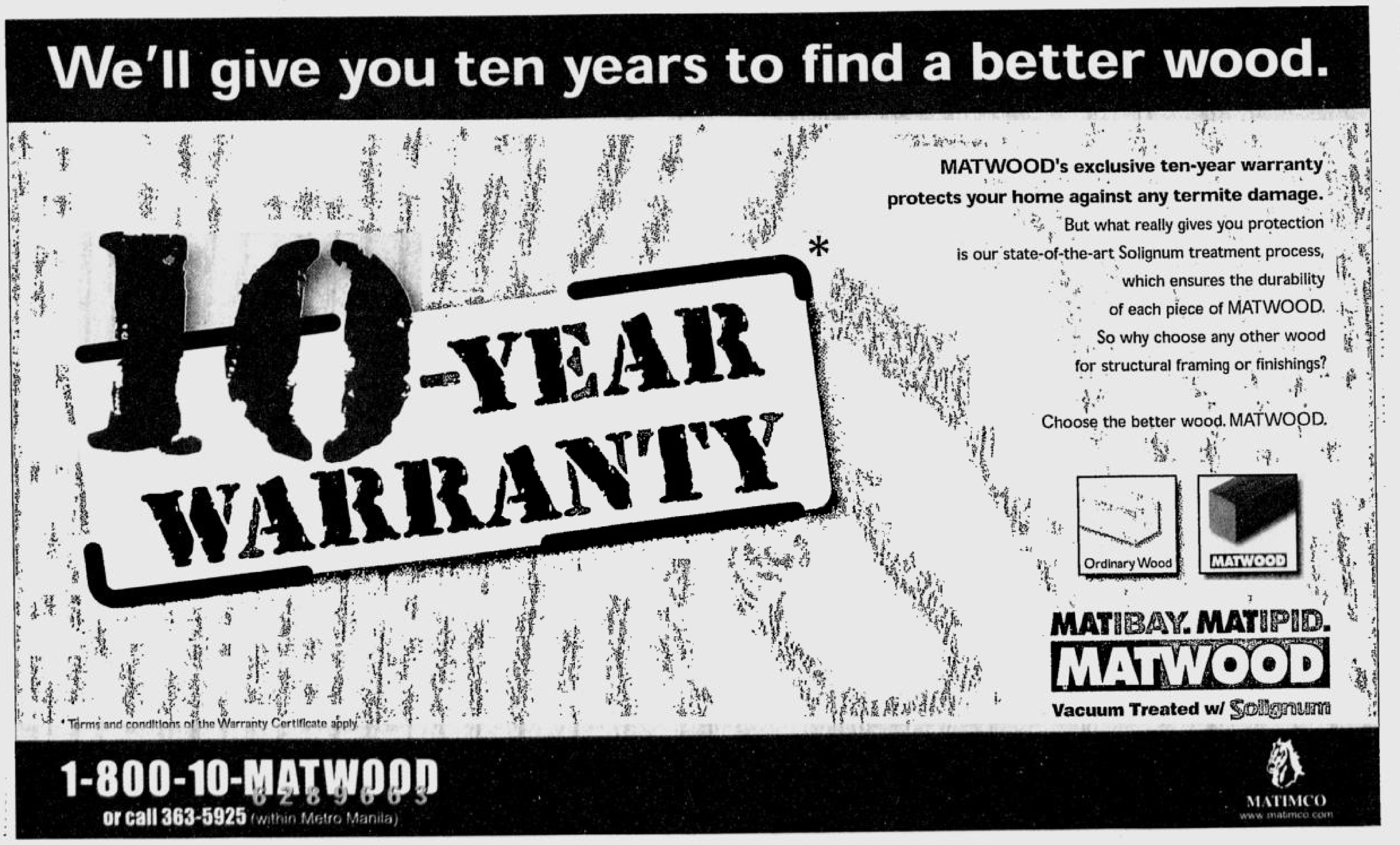
His frankness has earned him a lot of enemies and detractors (who did a lot of jumping up and down with glee when word of his embarrassing arrest got out.)

INTERVIEWED by Reed, Doris Day, shown here with perennial co-star Rock Hudson, "sprang into the Brown Derby for breakfast like a daisy looking for a spring bouquet to get lost in."

Many lamented his review of "Being John Malkovich" which he called "an exasperatingly precocious one-joke idea that collapses after the first 20 minutes and drags on numbingly, substituting conceit for substance."

He certainly spares no one's feelings, and his detractors don't spare his, either. "I hate Rex Reed," says one. "Despite his attempts over the years to promote himself as the great critic, he hasn't achieved anything but to become a joke."

Well, Reed may not be the great critic, and we may not agree with all of his views, but with his sharp eye, his humor, and his distinctive flair for powerful detail, Rex Reed is certainly *not* a joke.



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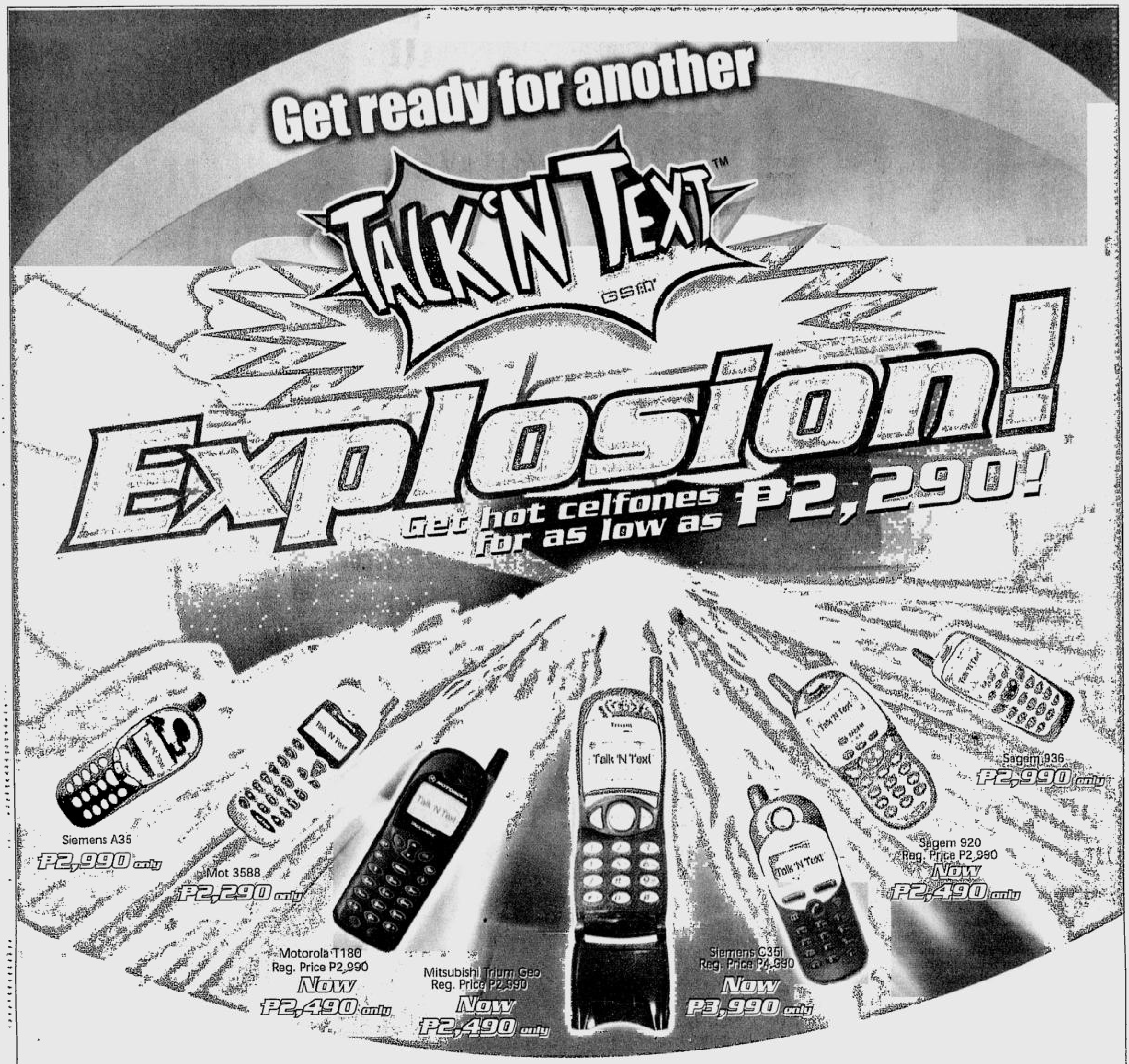

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'Star Wars' film is derivative

PORTMAN and Christensen are bland together, playing characters who are goodlooking and powerful, but torn by their individual ambitions.

By Christy Lemire

NEW YORK—"The dark side clouds everything," Yoda warns in the fifth installment of the "Star Wars" series.

He might as well have been talking about George Lucas' thinking.

"Star Wars: Episode II—Attack of the Clones" is better than the 1999 prequel, "Episode I—The Phantom Menace." Anything had to be. But Lucas, as writer-director-czar, still fails to recapture the fun and adventure that infused the original trilogy.

Obsolete

A bigger disappointment, though, is how derivative the movie is. Once hailed as the creative genius of our generation, Lucas has been copied so many times, he now seems obsolete, and ends up copying from himself. As in 1980's "The Empire Strikes Back"—the best film in the series—"Clones" features an asteroid storm, lumbering mechanical contraptions, and a key character who loses a limb in a light saber duel.

But Lucas also steals identifiable, sometimes iconic imagery from at least a half-dozen other movies: the nightmarish cityscape of "Blade Runner;" the Coliseum showdown of "Gladiator;" the robotic gadgetry of "Robocop;" the open helicopter flight of "Apocalypse Now" and "Platoon;" and a conveyor belt sequence straight out of "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom."

Light sabers

The premise is basically just "The Bodyguard" with light sabers. Senator Padme Amidala (Natalie Portman), former child queen of Naboo, is the target of an assassination attempt, and Jedi-in-training Anakin Skywalker (Hayden Christensen), who's loved her from afar for the past decade, is assigned to protect her.

Meanwhile, Anakin's mentor, Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor), searches for her attacker and discovers the development of an army of clones; this is where the story loses focus.

Eventually, he reteams with Anakin and Amidala to fight Count Dooku (Christopher Lee), a former Jedi knight who's turned evil and wants to take over the galaxy because . . . who knows? He just does. That's how indiscernible the plot and motivations are.

"Clones" samples almost as obviously as "Shrek," but not to the point of parody like "Scary Movie." Lucas does it often enough, though, that it makes me wonder whether he recognized the popularity of those movies and wanted a bit of the same

Such pop culture amalgamations have become enormously successful because they give us what we already know; they make us feel comfortable because we're in on the joke. With "Phantom Menace," Lucas created a truly original world, and he was universally derided for it (even though the movie made $431 million).

He'll deny it, but he clearly listened to the complaints about "Phantom Menace" and adapted to please the audience for "Clones." Jar Jar Binks was annoying and we saw too much of him last time; here, he's been toned down and only appears in a few scenes. Amidala's Kabuki makeup and Vegas showgirl-style headdresses were too distracting; here, her look is pretty and feminine. Conspicuously, she's also lost the faux British accent she spoke with as queen; now, she giggles like a schoolgirl when she talks about a boy she had a crush on, with "dark curly hair and dreamy eyes."

But Portman and Christensen are so bland together, they're the Britney Spears and Justin Timberlake of a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away—playing characters who are good-looking and powerful, but torn by their individual ambitions. Their love scenes are so devoid of romantic sparks, you'd never know that their coupling in Episode III produces Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia.

The all-digital effects of "Clones" are just as ineffective; the backgrounds look like the cartoons that they are. A scene in which Amidala and Anakin frolic in a meadow has such a hyper-real pastoral quality, it looks like a commercial for a feminine hygiene product.

Charm

The special effects from the original "Star Wars" may seem cheesy 25 years later, but they had a charm and a substance that's missing here.

The digital technology does allow for a miraculous scene involving a surprisingly agile Yoda; it's one of the few bright spots in an otherwise lifeless film. Other bright spots are unintentional—they're the result of laugh-out-loud bad dialogue.

A protracted battle scene toward the end between clones and droids is especially draggy; it's no fun watching mechanical soldiers zapping each other with lasers. A reddish dust that swirls around them makes it impossible to tell who's shooting whom; maybe that's Lucas' point, but it renders the scene inaccessible.

First appearance

"Star Wars" geeks, however, will be happy to see a few key pieces of the saga fitting into place: the initial stirrings of anger that will turn Anakin into Darth Vader; the origin of bounty hunter Boba Fett; the first appearance of Luke Skywalker's Uncle Owen and Aunt Beru.

As Obi-Wan, McGregor truly comes into his own this time, practically channeling Alec Guinness in his demeanor and the cadence of his speech.

And, admittedly, the ritual itself holds some allure. It's still a rush to sit in a packed theater (equipped with THX, naturally) when that first blast of John Williams' fanfare sounds. Then you have to endure the rest of the movie.

"Star Wars: Episode II—Attack of the Clones," a 20th Century Fox release, runs 135 minutes. Two stars (out of four). *AP*

Young and lucky director on the rise

By Rica Arevalo

VIVA Films' "Akala Mo" is directed by a promising MTV director, Lyle Sacris. Only 26 years old, Lyle has had an easy time breaking into the entertainment industry and is one of the luckiest among his peers because he's been given a chance to direct a full-length feature.

Worth

With "Akala Mo," will he prove his worth and join the ranks of other respected directors, or will his work be considered forgettable?

Lyle is a UP Film and Audio Visual Communications graduate. He has an impressive record: MTV Pilipinas 2001 Best Director, MTV Pilipinas 2001 Best Video, Best Video and Best Director—14th Awit Awards; 1st Place—Experimental Film ('Nosehair Conspiracy') at 13th Gawad Awards; 3rd Place—Experimental Film—15th Gawad Awards; NU Rock Awards 2000 (Agent Orange)—Video of the Year.

He is currently nominated in MTV Pilipinas' 2002 Best Video and Best Director competitions and has done videos for Slapshock, Rivermaya, Chico Science, Teeth, Side A, Kyla, Chico and Delamar.

Still photography

"I started in still photography and then *napagtripan ko ang* film. I looked for a course closest to photography and that was film. Once I was in, I fell in love. I found it more challenging. I saw 'Brazil' by Terry Gilliam, then I saw 'Oro, Plata, Mata' by Peque Gallaga, and that convinced me that *meron palang* hope *ang Pilipinas na gumawa ng magandang* film. *Ang pinaka*-influential *sa akin sa* style *ay yung* 'Un Chien Andalou,'" shares Lyle.

"Akala Mo" was offered to Lyle by Viva Films. He says, "It was an unusual process because the script was done and we were on a very tight schedule, so there was only time for very minor changes."

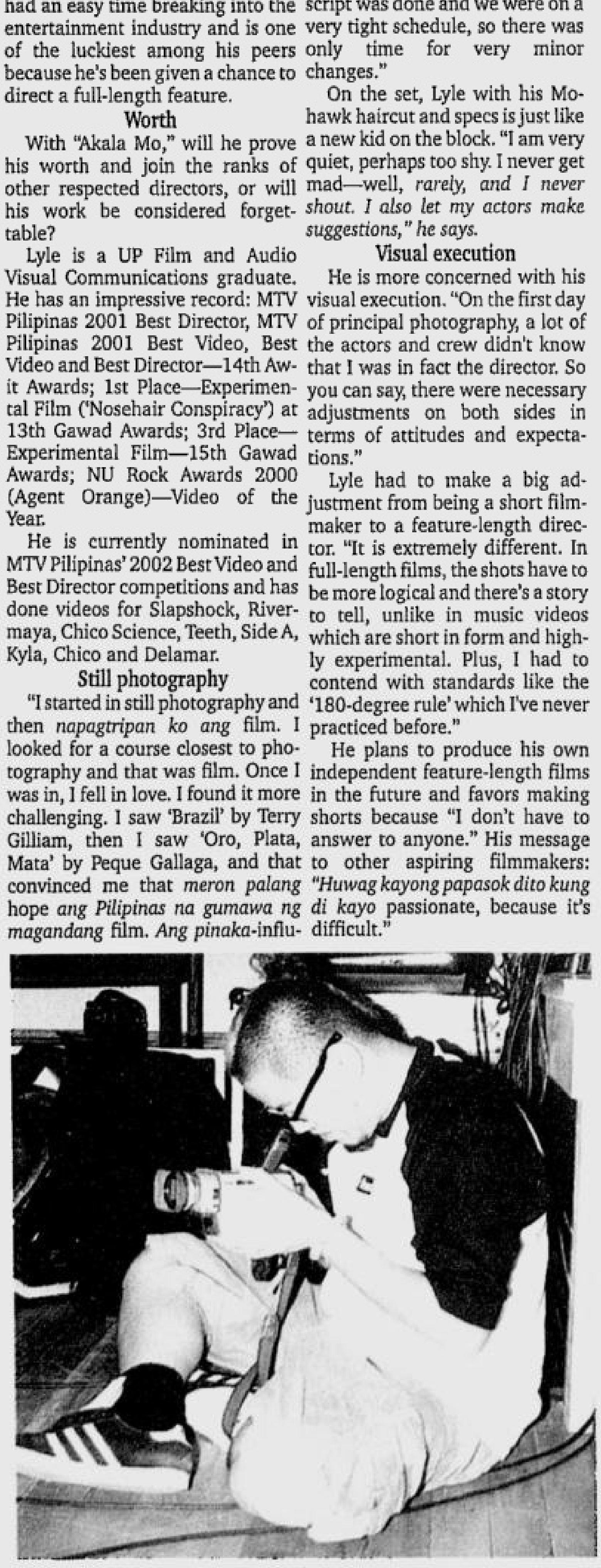
On the set, Lyle with his Mohawk haircut and specs is just like a new kid on the block. "I am very quiet, perhaps too shy. I never get mad—well, *rarely, and I never shout. I also let my actors make suggestions," he says.*

Visual execution

He is more concerned with his visual execution. "On the first day of principal photography, a lot of the actors and crew didn't know that I was in fact the director. So you can say, there were necessary adjustments on both sides in terms of attitudes and expectations."

Lyle had to make a big adjustment from being a short filmmaker to a feature-length director. "It is extremely different. In full-length films, the shots have to be more logical and there's a story to tell, unlike in music videos which are short in form and highly experimental. Plus, I had to contend with standards like the '180-degree rule' which I've never practiced before."

He plans to produce his own independent feature-length films in the future and favors making shorts because "I don't have to answer to anyone." His message to other aspiring filmmakers: *"Huwag kayong papasok dito kung di kayo* passionate, because it's difficult."



SACRIS. New kid on the film block.

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Super B!

By Edmund L. Sicam

QUINTO and Agustin on wings of fantasy.

B as in Booba, the sexy and kooky character played by Rufa Mae Quinto last year. Now she's back as yet another sexy and kooky character, Ate Bi, but this time she's got super powers, courtesy of a magic ring that she has obtained from her persisten suitor Lordino of the Rings, nicknamed Lord (Marvin Agustin).

Unlike "Booba," however, Super B is meant for a general audience even if her costume, crafted by the Batoctoys, the prosthetic experts, is quite revealing.

Special effects

B also stands for Bernal, Joyce Bernal, who's directing this movie that requires special effects but doesn't have the budget to compete with "Spider-Man" and other superhero movies. So Joyce has had to ask the actors to take the place of the effects. Like, Marvin had to contort his face to show the ill effects of the ring. Rufa had to be hoisted and propped up on a tall structure for the flying effects. No blue screen to work with in postproduction!

Joyce says the inital flying effects did require digital wizardy but once Rufa's flying powers were established, they resorted to manual effects. That's why the actors are hoping that, at the very least, they should win an award for special effects come trophy-giving time.

We visited the shooting of the movie at a production house in Makati where Melanie Marquez and Mylene Dizon, who play the villains, were shooting an MTV with toilet paper strewn across the set as their background. We asked Joyce how many rolls of toilet paper she ordered for the scene. "One million," she said jokingly. The director just had a brainstorm and used the unglamorous material for the musical number.

Shortcuts

It's a comedy so we can excuse the shortcuts the movie has taken in production design. Melanie and Mylene play The Flower Pot Girls, who are everybody's favorites but in reality, are evil characters out to subjugate all musical fans. Super B is out to foil their nefarious plot.

Marvin is Rufa's love interest in the movie but that development doesn't come until later. Ate B is crazy about Troy Montero who exits from the scene and makes way for Marvin, who plays a geeky character, *"pinaglihi sa Santo Nino,"* with a teenie-weenie voice and curly hair.

During the shoot, we noticed a baby in the sidelines. It turned out to be *direk* Joyce's bundle of joy, the one who has everyone guessing who her father is. We were not about to ask Joyce the critical question and instead commented how cute the infant was. Her name is Liam, three-and-a-half months old. Why Liam, which is a boy's name, like Liam Neeson? *"Basta, nagustuhan ko yung* name *na 'yon.* When I found out that I was expecting a girl, *pagod na ako kaiisip ng pangalan* so I settled for Liam. Cute *kasi*," Joyce explained.

Liam tags along every chance she gets as long as there's a place where the baby can rest comfortbaly with her *yaya*. *"Lakwatsera kasi 'yan. Gusto maraming tao nakikipagusap sa kanya.* Besides, miss *ko siya*, When I leave her at home, *tulog na pag-uwi ko*," Joyce added.

Mom's footsteps

So is Liam following in her mom's footsteps? *"Gusto ko maging* singer *siya, para malaki ang kita*, like Regine Velasquez. *Mahirap maging direktor*," Joyce said.

"Super B" is Joyce's second movie with Rufa Mae in the lead role. She has, however, used the sexy star in supporting roles in many of her movies.

When Joyce was still working as a film editor and Rufa Mae was just starting, the sexy actress was a constant visitor in the editing room. "Joyce, *dito muna ako kasi minamanyak ako ng* producer," she would tell Joyce. Since then, the two have become close friends.

Joyce didn't seem frazzled when we talked to her. There were still three shooting days left. *"Hindi nakaka*-stress *ang* film. Comedy *kasi. Sa* drama, *masyadong mabigat ang* pressure. *Lalo na pag* big stars *ang* involved. *Kailangang kumita ng malaki ang pelikula. Ito, wala. Maliit lang ang* budget."

The movie has a female superhero and female villains. Is she trying to make a statement about woman power? Joyce says she is not a feminist and just wants a fun movie that will entertain the audience. Based on her track record, "Super B" should do just that.

After 'The Fly,' Cronenberg comes up with 'Spider'

By Angela Doland

CRONENBERG, right, with Miranda Richardson.

CANNES, France—David Cronenberg's new movie is something of a departure for him: it has no special effects, no gruesome physical transformations, no science fiction in the story line.

Thriller

"Spider" is dark, but it's also somewhat restrained, considering it's a thriller about a schizophrenic who's obsessed by his mother's murder. The focus is on psychology.

People are talking about "Spider" in Cannes because it's a U-turn for the director, who made "The Fly" and "eXistenZ" and who has a reputation for shaking up the Riviera film festival.

In 1996, Cannes audiences booed and walked out of "Crash," the Canadian director's twisted movie about lovers who get turned on by car crashes; then it won the Jury Prize. And when Cronenberg headed the jury in 1999, people were shocked by its choices—like giving top acting prizes to people who had never acted before.

"I'm very misunderstood," Cronenberg said at a news conference, joking about his unusual choices. "I know some people see this as quite different from my other films."

Still, Cronenberg's not turning his back on the genres that made him famous.

"If the next movie I do requires a lot of effects and violence or gore, I'll do it," he said.

Murder

Though "Spider" revolves around a murder, it doesn't focus on the act of violence. Cronenberg says he kept paring down the script to focus on the acting. When Patrick McGrath adapted his novel "Spider" for the screenplay, Cronenberg asked him to leave out some of the more gruesome details.

Ralph Fiennes plays Spider, a schizophrenic Londoner who's just been released from a mental institution.

Handsome Fiennes is transformed for the part: His hair is constantly sweaty, his fingernails are cracked and dirty, his eyes are watery and eerily vacant. The British actor met with schizophrenics in a London clinic to prepare for the part.

Spider spends most of his time wandering through deserted London streets, moonlit gardens and underpasses. He also scribbles unintelligible code in his diary and combs through trash cans looking for bits of twine, which he uses to build elaborate spider webs in his apartment.

Childhood haunts

Back in his old neighborhood, Spider starts visiting his childhood haunts. In flashbacks, he watches himself as a child, and sees his father (Gabriel Byrne) kill his mother (Miranda Richardson) with a garden spade, replacing her with a prostitute from the local pub.

Richardson is great as Spider's warm, doting mother. She also plays other characters in the movie—saying which ones would spoil the surprise ending. The gore might be gone, but Cronenberg has found other ways to startle moviegoers. *AP*

'X-Files' set for greener galaxies with series finale

'X-FILES.' Headed for the rerun universe.

By Doug Young

LOS ANGELES—The truth is finally going to be out there, maybe. "The X-Files," network television's weekly encounter with the paranormal and the extra-terrestrial, will come to an end Sunday (Fox, 9 p.m. EDT) with a two-hour special that its creators swear will answer almost all of the questions the show has generated for the last nine years.

Cable stations

Fox has promised a tell-all series finale for the hit show, which is now heading for the greener galaxies of the rerun universe—on cable stations far, far away on the dial.

Dribs and drabs have emerged about the the finale, following Fox's January announcement that creator Chris Carter would rest his writer's pen at the end of the current season, its ninth.

The show is named for the FBI's so-called X-Files, or unexplained cases involving paranormal activity, and the efforts of two agents—one scientifically minded and the other convinced of an alien conspiracy—to get to the bottom of things.

In announcing the show's retirement, Carter promised many questions raised in the first eight seasons would be answered in the finale, which will feature a return by David Duchovny reprising his role as Special Agent Fox Mulder.

Past characters

Carter said the finale, which will feature appearances by past characters, will set the record straight once and for all if a baby born to Special Agent Dana Scully, played by Gillian Anderson, was fathered by Mulder.

Carter also promised to resolve if there was any truth to one of the show's running pretexts—that aliens and humans were involved in a government-connected conspiracy to take over the planet.

He also dangled the possibility of resolution to the sexually charged but largely hands-off relationship between Mulder and Scully. Carter has hinted that there will be a happy ending for fans who want to see them embark together on a grand journey through time and space.

'The Truth'

In the two-hour finale titled "The Truth"—a nod to the show's tag line that "The truth is out there"—Mulder, who has been in hiding this season, will be on trial for murder.

"The trial leads to a military tribunal at which he must attempt to save his own life and justify the existence of the X-Files, as well as the existence of extra-terrestrials," Fox said in a description of the show.

The ending comes as a minor crescendo for the show, which developed a cult following and high ratings to match after its launch in 1993. The franchise also spawned a 1998 movie by the same name starring Duchovny and Anderson.

Reduced role

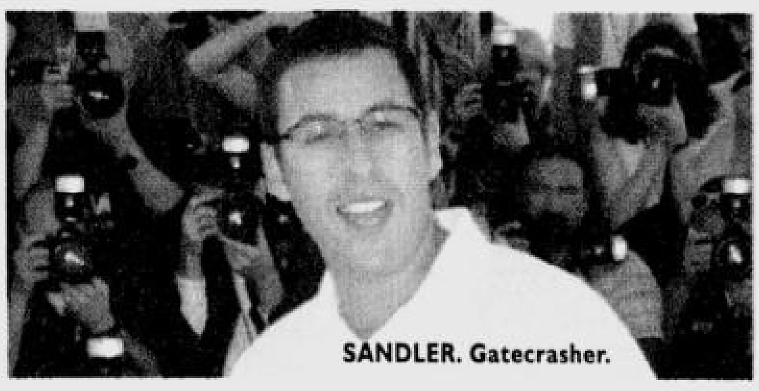
In recent seasons, however, ratings have flagged with Mulder's departure as a regular character and Scully's reduced role in the current season.

In their place, Carter brought in Special Agent John Doggett, played by Robert Patrick, and Special Agent Monica Reyes, played by Annabeth Gisch.

But the new pair failed to click the way the original one did, and the show's ratings have been lackluster this season, with an average of 8.6 million viewers tuning in each week—about half of what it attracted during its heyday.

In an acknowledgment to its fading popularity, Carter said he would retire the series voluntarily this year rather than wait for Fox to pull it instead. While the series will leave the small screen, fans have been promised a second "X-Files" movie, although a date has not been set. A show spokeswoman said shooting for the film could begin as soon as next summer, with a release date about a year later.Fox is a unit of News Corp. Ltd. *Reuters*

Adam Sandler makes splash at Cannes Festival



SANDLER. Gatecrasher.

By Joelle Diderich

CANNES, France—Adam Sandler, the accident-prone comic hero of simplistic US hits like "Big Daddy" and "The Waterboy," gate-crashed the rarefied world of art house film on Sunday.

180-degree turn

Sandler performs a 180-degree turn in "Punch-Drunk Love," a romantic comedy with a twist directed by cult independent director Paul Thomas Anderson.

The New York-born Sandler is emotionally wrenching as Barry Egan, a small business owner brow-beaten by his seven sisters and unable to fall in love until he meets Lena, a mysterious woman played by Emily Watson.

It was also a complete change of direction for Anderson, whose last movie was the three-hour lyrical opus "Magnolia" with Tom Cruise.

The much shorter "Punch-Drunk Love" is competing for the coveted Palme d'Or at the world's biggest film festival, where Anderson said he was thrilled to surprise audiences with his unlikely choice for the lead role.

"I love him. I absolutely think he's the greatest," said the director, who spotted Sandler on the cult US comedy show "Saturday Night Live" in the early 1990s.

Funny

"He really just made me laugh, and he walks very funny and his head is kind of funny, and his ear is a little bit funny. I haven't seen him naked but that might be funny," he said.

Sandler interjected: "Actually, just to be honest with you, naked is not so bad."

The movie also gives Watson a chance to break free from the tragic characters she has played in films like "Breaking the Waves" and "Hilary and Jackie." "I said I didn't want to cry and I didn't want to die," she said. "It's very delicious being in a romantic film." Although the message of "Punch-Drunk Love" is ultimately redeeming, it is a dark film that explores lonely characters adrift in a world of strip malls and soulless apartments.

Egan is a monument of barely-suppressed rage, exploding in destructive fits at unexpected moments. "I think he's a bit confused, he's a bit angry, and a lot of it has to do with how he grew up," said Anderson. "It's about that feeling when you can't say something, and you just start to throw punches."

Also in weekend competition was "Demonlover" by French director Olivier Assayas, a complex thriller about a corporate battle to distribute Japanese pornographic comics via the Internet. *Reuters*

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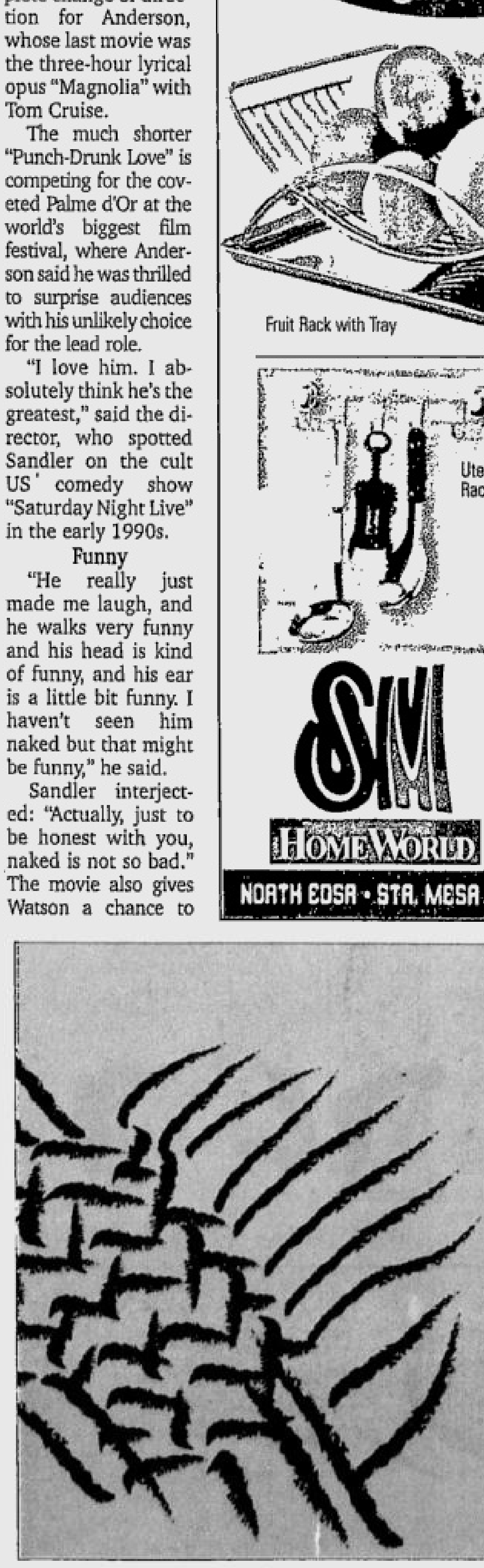


Get in Touch with How Our Culture was Woven

Visit the **Greenhills Food and Handicraft Festival** at the Greenhills Shopping Complex on May 17 to June 9 and explore the best of the Philippine regions in a shopping experience that will satisfy all senses.

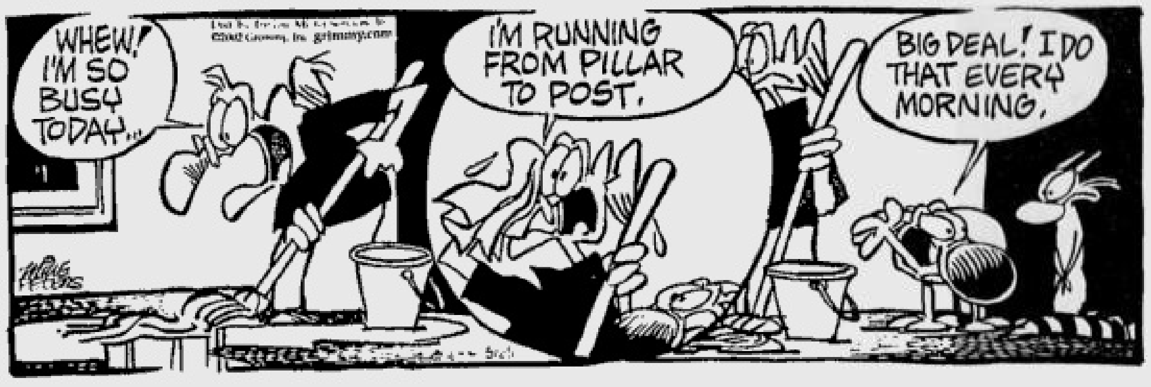
Discover our culture while bargain hunting. Only at the 1st regional trade fair of the Greenhills Shopping Complex.

Catch spectacular cultural shows on these dates: (All shows start at 2 pm)

May 18 Drum and Bugle Band
May 19 Rondalla
May 25 Ati-Atihan
May 26 Pangkat Kawayan
June 1 Maranao Cultural Show
June 2 Maranao Cultural Show
June 8 Drum and Lyre

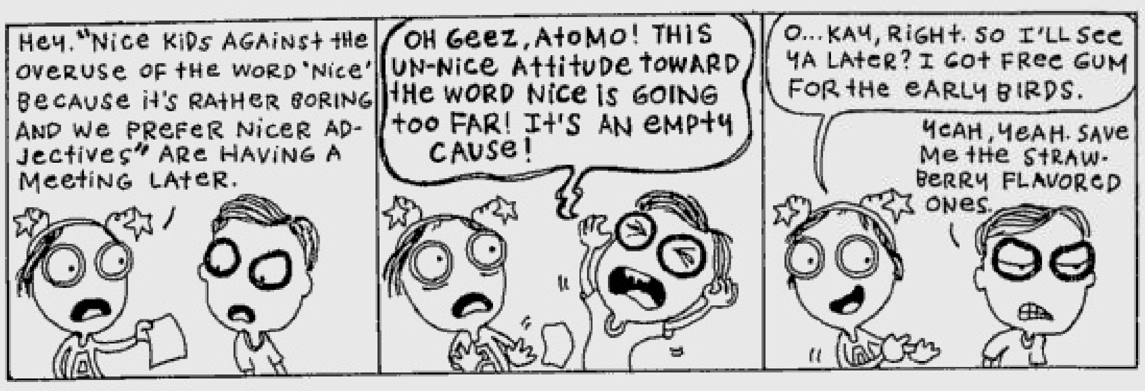
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


WHEW! I'M SO BUSY TODAY...
I'M RUNNING FROM PILLAR TO POST.
BIG DEAL! I DO THAT EVERY MORNING.

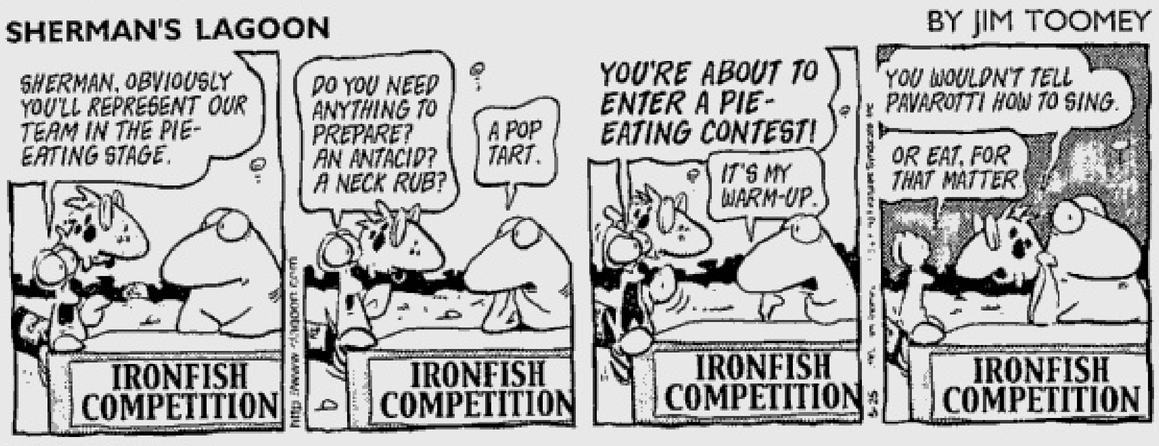
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey. "Nice Kids Against the overuse of the word 'Nice' because it's rather boring and we prefer nicer adjectives" are having a meeting later.
OH Geez, Atomo! THIS UN-Nice Attitude toward the word Nice is going too far! It's an empty cause!
O...Kay, Right. So I'll see ya later? I got free gum for the early birds.
Yeah, yeah. Save me the strawberry flavored ones.

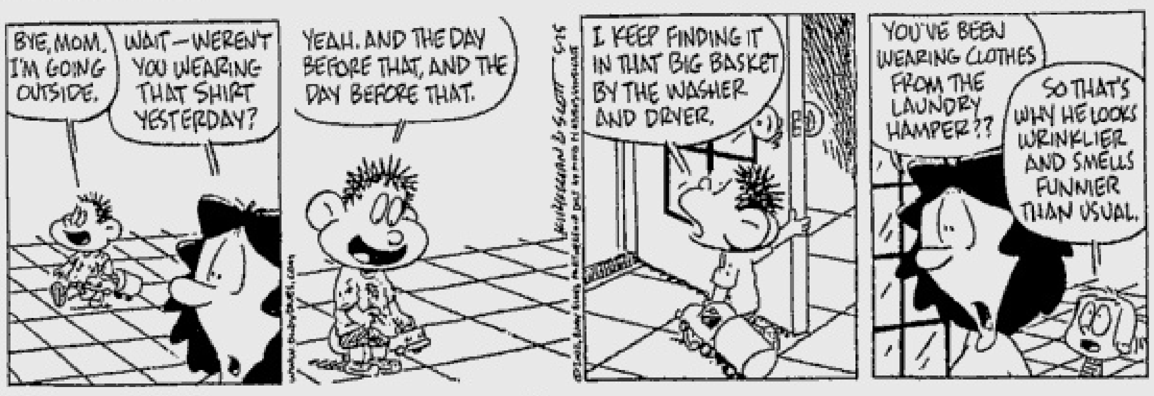
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


SHERMAN, OBVIOUSLY YOU'LL REPRESENT OUR TEAM IN THE PIE-EATING STAGE.
IRONFISH COMPETITION
DO YOU NEED ANYTHING TO PREPARE? AN ANTACID? A NECK RUB?
A POP TART.
IRONFISH COMPETITION
YOU'RE ABOUT TO ENTER A PIE-EATING CONTEST!
IT'S MY WARM-UP.
IRONFISH COMPETITION
YOU WOULDN'T TELL PAVAROTTI HOW TO SING.
OR EAT, FOR THAT MATTER
IRONFISH COMPETITION

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


BYE, MOM. I'M GOING OUTSIDE.
WAIT—WEREN'T YOU WEARING THAT SHIRT YESTERDAY?
YEAH. AND THE DAY BEFORE THAT, AND THE DAY BEFORE THAT.
I KEEP FINDING IT IN THAT BIG BASKET BY THE WASHER AND DRYER.
YOU'VE BEEN WEARING CLOTHES FROM THE LAUNDRY HAMPER??
SO THAT'S WHY HE LOOKS WRINKLIER AND SMELLS FUNNIER THAN USUAL.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Connie Sellecca, Dixie Carter, Robert Ludlum, Mike Myers

Happy Birthday: You'll find it easy to make new friends this year. You will experience greater confidence and, as a result, you will find that others will be receptive to you and your ideas. Recognition for a job well done will put you in the limelight. Your numbers are 7, 18, 24, 29, 36, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Double check the personal papers of older relatives. Something funny may be going on behind your back. If you are quick to deal with the situation, you'll probably make financial gains.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't let your emotions get the better of you today. Make plans to do something enjoyable with people who lift your spirits. There is no point in sulking or being stubborn.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You can make a personal difference to yourself today if you make the effort to stop a bad habit or get into a fitness routine. Don't get down; get busy making the necessary changes.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You'll feel like being lazy so invite someone to join you while you sit back and reminisce. Don't get too sentimental. There is a lot to talk about regarding a possible future partnership.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't take an unnecessary risk today, especially if it will affect your home and the ones you love. Situations may escalate if you disagree with someone you are close to. Put others first and avoid discord.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You'll feel much better if you are out and about d g things that you enjoy with fric .s. The more you get to talk about the things you are involved with, the sooner your goals will be clear to you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Your mind may be on your work today, especially if you left things unfinished. Put in a little overtime if it will make you feel better. Remembering things from your past will help to unravel a puzzle.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Get out and mingle with others and you will find out all sorts of valuable information. Sticking too close to home may pose a problem for you. Creative pursuits will pay off.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Your emotional energy will be hard to control. Don't let those you love goad you into arguments. Joint ventures may not turn out to be as favorable as you first thought.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can make headway today if you plan your actions carefully. Your involvement in a rather intellectual group will lead to all sorts of interesting possibilities.

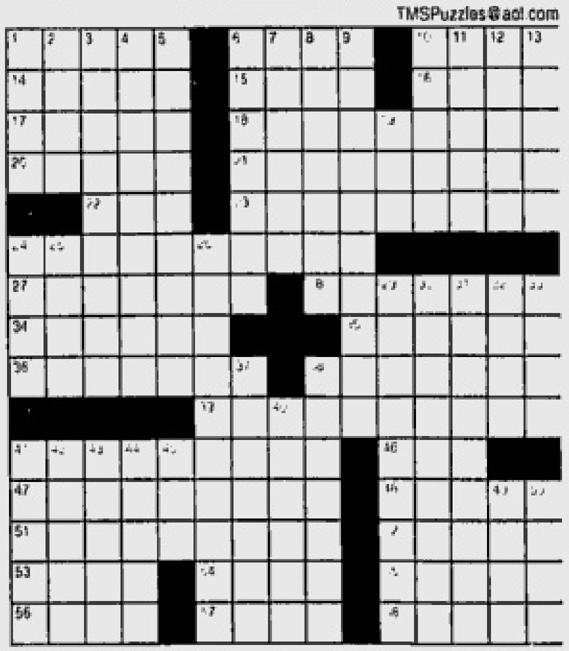
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): This isn't the day to take a chance or trust someone else with your belongings. You may be taken advantage of if you are too generous with your time and money. Don't overspend or contribute to impress someone who isn't worthy of your time, money or effort.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Get involved in something that interests you like a course or a trip. You will attract attention today and if you are single this is a great day to socialize.

Birthday Baby: You will have social and business success. You will want to travel throughout your life. Your family will have an important effect on you and your decisions.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Josiah Breward
Scranton, PA

5/25/02

ACROSS
1 Pointed remarks
6 Length times width
10 "Back in Black" rockers
14 Grenoble's river
15 Central part of a church
16 Traditional wisdom
17 Norse gods, collectively
18 Repetition
20 Fry lightly
21 Have conniptions
22 Flowed
23 Signs up for another tour
24 1215 charter
27 Meetings' schedules
28 Cylindrical source of power
34 Even weaker
35 __ up (combined)
36 Loud firecrackers
38 Ornithologist
39 "Cabaret" source
41 Based
46 Performed
47 On break
48 English architect Jones
51 Say again
52 Video-game pioneer company
53 Taj Mahal location
54 From the beginning
55 Bottom line
56 Chinese currency
57 Milky Way maker
58 Opposing side

DOWN
1 Mindset
2 Sailing
3 Experiencing revival
4 Thomas Arne song, "Rule __"
5 Singer of love songs
6 "__ Dance"
7 Somewhat
8 Chad of "Medical Center"
9 Of plane navigation
10 Asian mountain range
11 Hairdos
12 __ du seigneur
13 Dollar fractions
19 Hole-making tool
24 Benson novel, "__ and Lucia"
25 Fever with chills
26 Heart curves
29 Send out more waves
30 Shuttlecock game
31 Occurring without delay
32 Approach
33 "Giant" writer Ferber
37 "Black Magic Woman" group
38 A must to avoid
40 Airport contact
41 Wandering call
42 South Korean city
43 Director Kurosawa
44 Mythical Greek giant
45 Feminizing suffix
49 Metric unit of mass
50 Unctuous

Friday's Puzzle Solved

C	L	A	W	S	■	B	I	F	F	■	A	L	A	S
H	E	L	O	T	■	A	D	U	E	■	L	O	D	E
I	N	T	R	O	■	T	I	G	E	■	B	R	I	E
A	D	O	L	L	S	H	O	U	S	E	■	N	E	D
■	■	■	D	E	A	R	M	E	■	L	U	A	U	S
C	O	T	■	S	R	O	■	S	C	O	L	D	■	■
O	S	H	A	■	A	B	A	■	A	N	T	O	N	Y
B	L	E	U	■	L	E	V	E	R	■	R	O	U	E
B	O	O	G	I	E	■	A	N	D	■	A	N	N	A
■	■	L	U	M	E	N	■	T	I	A	■	E	N	S
I	N	D	R	I	■	O	P	I	A	T	E	■	■	■
R	I	M	■	T	O	B	A	C	C	O	R	O	A	D
E	X	A	M	■	P	A	G	E	■	M	A	M	B	A
N	O	I	R	■	A	G	E	R	■	I	T	A	L	Y
E	N	D	S	■	L	O	T	S	■	J	O	N	E	S

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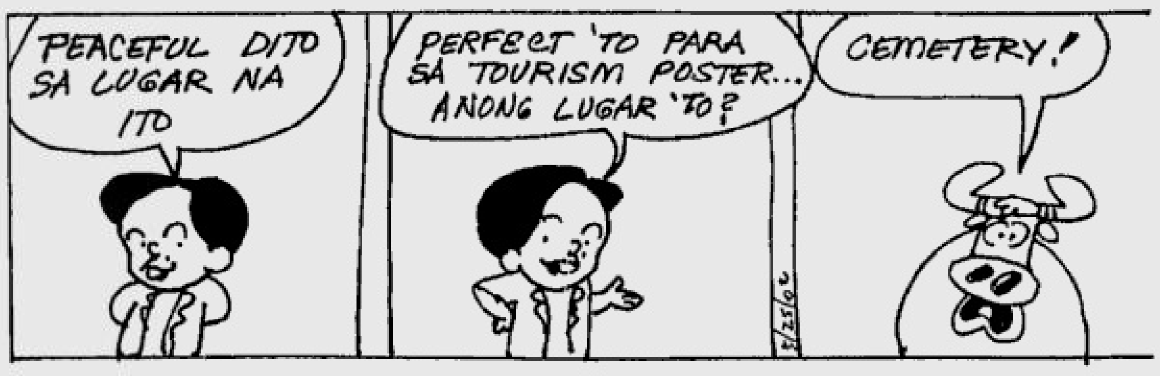
5/25/02

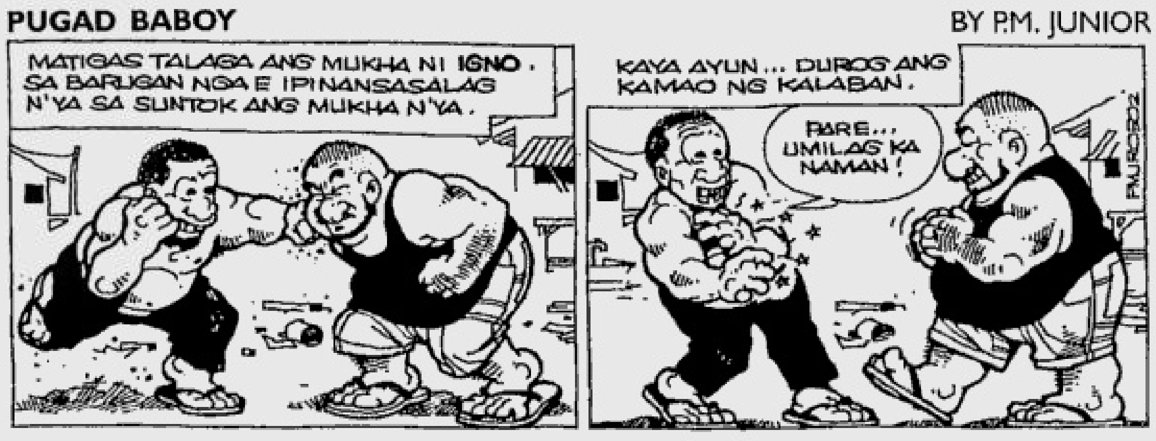
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PEACEFUL DITO SA LUGAR NA ITO
PERFECT 'TO PARA SA TOURISM POSTER... ANONG LUGAR 'TO?
5/25/02
CEMETERY!

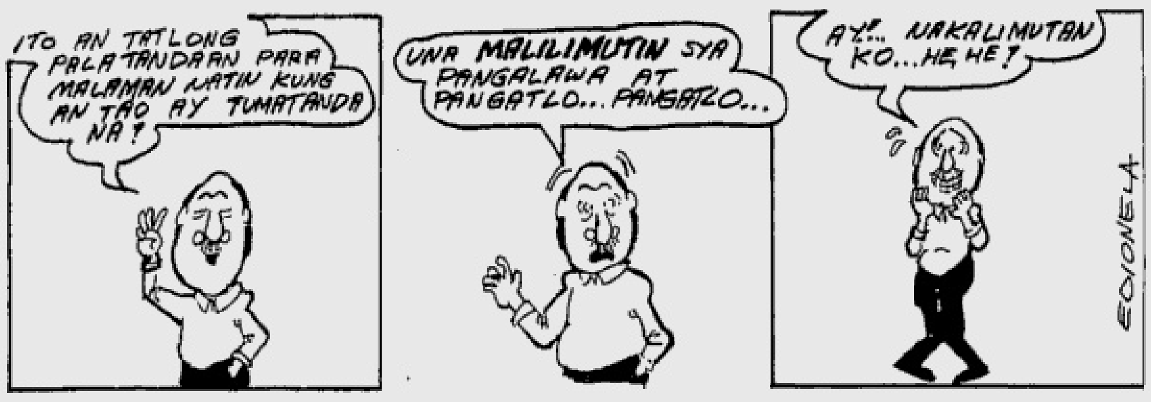
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MATIGAS TALAGA ANG MUKHA NI IGNO. SA BARUGAN NGA E IPINANSASALAG N'YA SA SUNTOK ANG MUKHA N'YA.
KAYA AYUN... DUROG ANG KAMAO NG KALABAN.
PARE... UMILAG KA NAMAN!

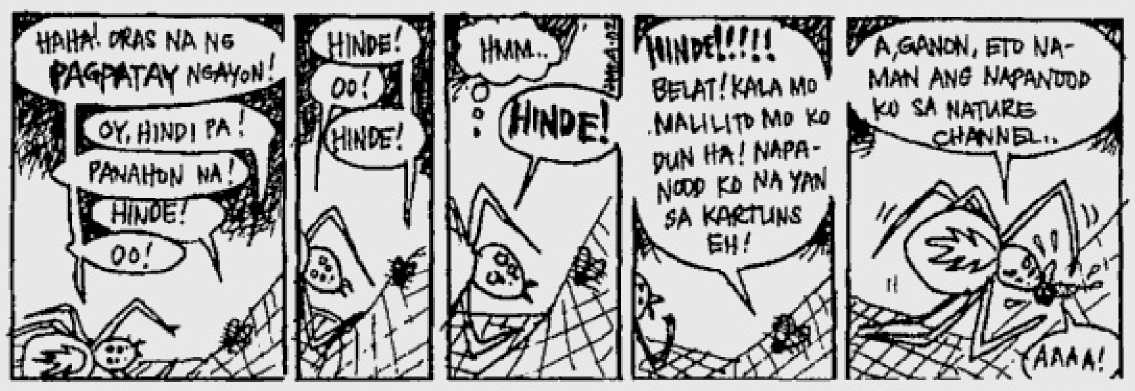
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


ITO AN TATLONG PALATANDAAN PARA MALAMAN NATIN KUNG AN TAO AY TUMATANDA NA!
UNA MALILIMUTIN SYA PANGALAWA AT PANGATLO... PANGATLO...
AY!.. NAKALIMUTAN KO... HE HE!
EDIONELA

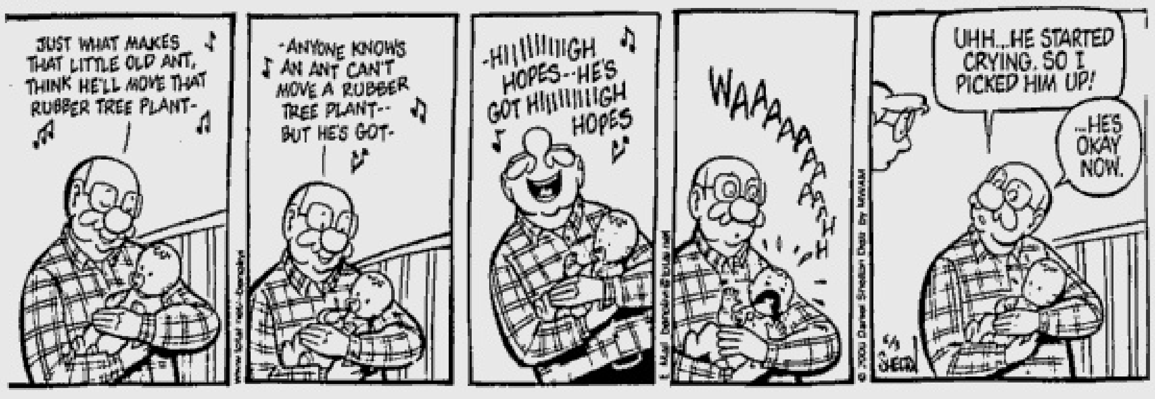
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HAHA! ORAS NA NG PAGPATAY NGAYON!
OY, HINDI PA!
PANAHON NA!
HINDE!
OO!
HINDE!
OO!
HINDE!
HMM..
HINDE!
HINDE!!!!
BELAT! KALA MO MALILITO MO KO DUN HA! NAPANOOD KO NA YAN SA KARTUNS EH!
A, GANON, ETO NAMAN ANG NAPANOOD KO SA NATURE CHANNEL..
AAAA!

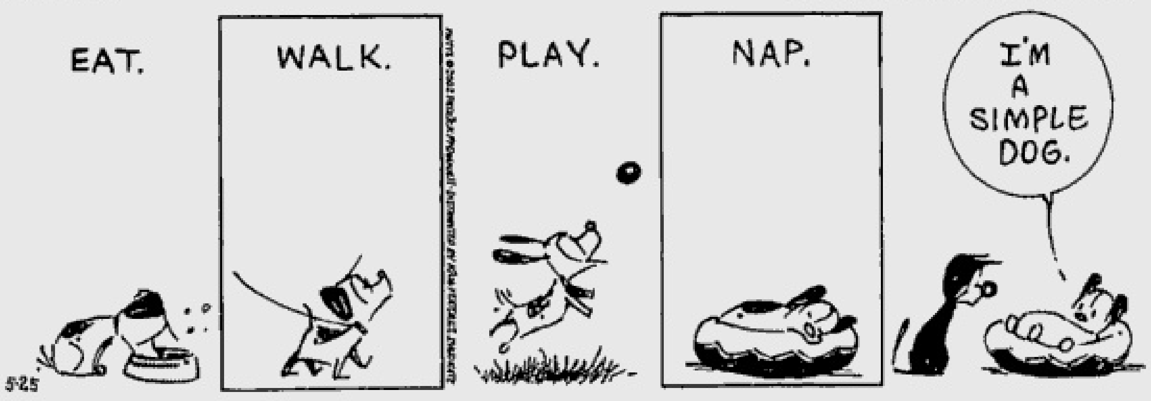
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


JUST WHAT MAKES THAT LITTLE OLD ANT, THINK HE'LL MOVE THAT RUBBER TREE PLANT-
-ANYONE KNOWS AN ANT CAN'T MOVE A RUBBER TREE PLANT-- BUT HE'S GOT-
-HIIIIIIIGH HOPES--HE'S GOT HIIIIIIIGH HOPES
WAAAAAAAAAHH
UHH...HE STARTED CRYING. SO I PICKED HIM UP!
...HE'S OKAY NOW.

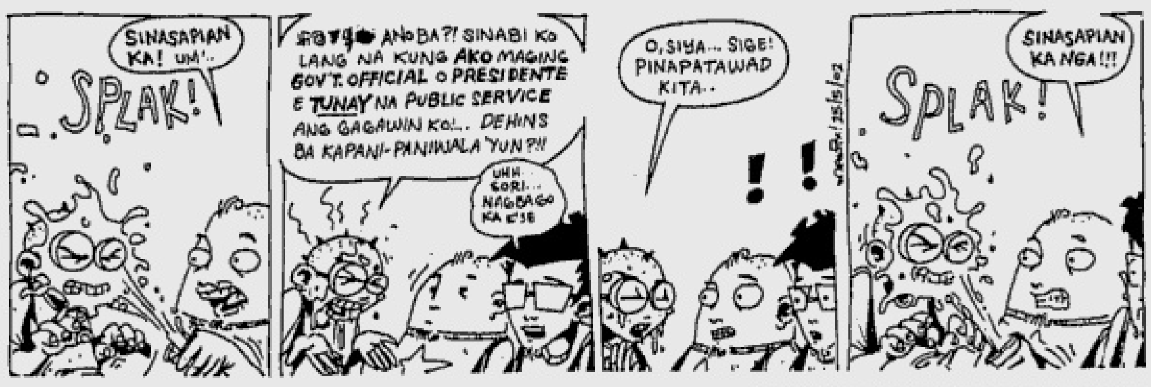
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


EAT.
WALK.
PLAY.
NAP.
I'M A SIMPLE DOG.
5-25

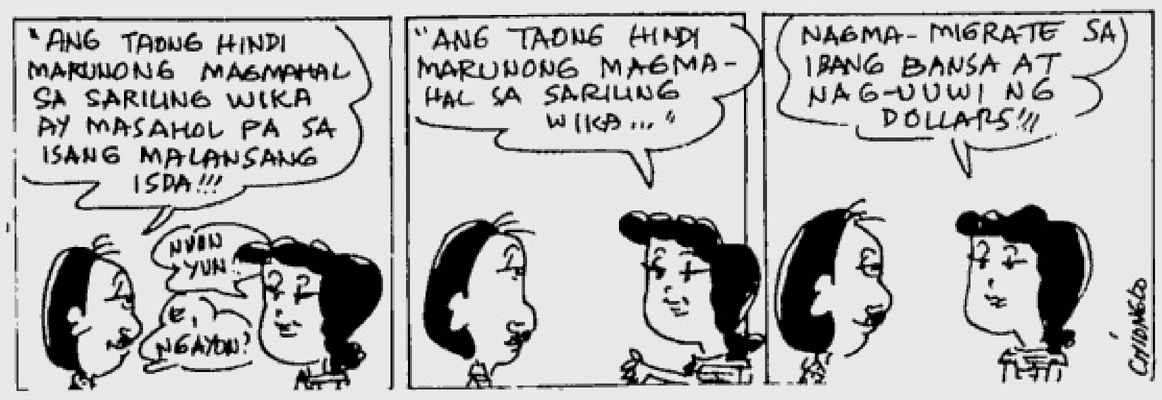
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


SINASAPIAN KA! UM'..
SPLAK!
ANO BA?! SINABI KO LANG NA KUNG AKO MAGING GOV'T OFFICIAL O PRESIDENTE E TUNAY NA PUBLIC SERVICE ANG GAGAWIN KO!... DEHINS BA KAPANI-PANIWALA 'YUN?!!
UHH.. SORI... NAGBAGO KA E'SE
O, SIYA... SIGE! PINAPATAWAD KITA..
! !
SINASAPIAN KA NGA!!!
SPLAK!

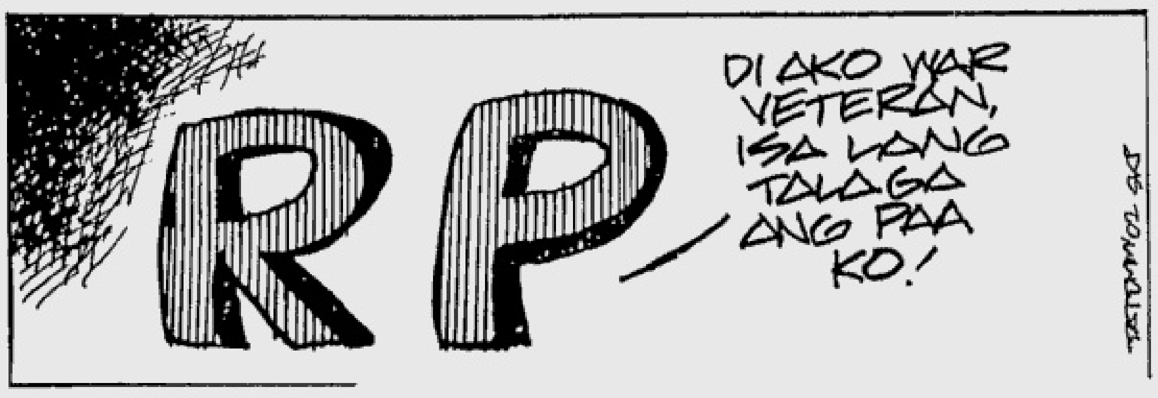
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


"ANG TAONG HINDI MARUNONG MAGMAHAL SA SARILING WIKA AY MASAHOL PA SA ISANG MALANSANG ISDA!!!
NUON YUN
E, NGAYON?
"ANG TAONG HINDI MARUNONG MAGMAHAL SA SARILING WIKA..."
NAGMA-MIGRATE SA IBANG BANSA AT NAG-UUWI NG DOLLARS!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


RP
DI AKO WAR VETERAN, ISA LANG TALAGA ANG PAA KO!

Documentary brings top actresses together to contemplate Hollywood pressures

WINGER. Retired at age 39.

ARQUETTE. Nobody refused.

By Jocelyn Noveck

CANNES, France—So whatever happened to Debra Winger?

As it happens, after three Oscar nominations, the star of "Urban Cowboy," "An Officer and a Gentleman" and "Terms of Endearment" basically retired seven years ago, at age 39.

For fellow actress Rosanna Arquette, that fact was enough to launch a movie.

Limits

Arquette decided to interview Hollywood's top actresses to discuss the pressures and limits they face, particularly as they hit the age of 40. Her goal was to figure out what drove Winger from the business.

The result—"Searching for Debra Winger"—is interesting for the honest responses it evokes from women like Sharon Stone, Whoopi Goldberg, Meg Ryan, Holly Hunter, Jane Fonda and Melanie Griffith, among many others. But the film could be much better organized, and Arquette has a distracting habit of rambling when she herself is on camera.

To make the film, Arquette says she just picked up the phone and called women she admired. "Nobody refused," she says, "and there were so many I couldn't use because we ran out of money."

The actresses range from younger women like Gwyneth Paltrow, who clearly has no problems now ("I love my job!"), to older actresses already bitter and sometimes even struggling for money,

Ertswhile mermaid

Daryl Hannah, the erstwhile mermaid of "Splash," now 41, speaks of being cast as a mother. "People said, 'don't you mind?' But I was fine with it," Hannah says—until she was given ugly, baggy clothes to wear and an unattractive brown wig.

Whoopi Goldberg engages in a comic riff about her expanding derriere, and also talks about the difficulty of finding a man to live with. "You end up supporting them (financially)," she says.

She concludes succinctly: "Anybody who is not you, who is living with you, is a problem."

Sharon Stone, on the other hand, now married and a mother, says that her life is much more fulfilling now than ever before.

Then there's Jane Fonda, who tells how she quit the movie business 10 years ago—simply because on their second date, her now ex-husband Ted Turner told her she'd have to drop her career to be with him. She decided she "wouldn't regret 10 more movies or five more movies, but I was going to regret lack of intimacy." Then, however, Fonda goes into a wistful, tearful description of what she misses about acting—and one can't help regretting, for her, the choice that she made.

STONE, FONDA AND RYAN. Honest responses.

Irony

Holly Hunter says the irony is that actresses are best in their 40s, just when the roles are dwindling. "Once I hit 40, I had chops as an actress that I didn't have when I was 30," she says, "and I want to use them."

The actresses wax funny and bitter at the culture of plastic surgery in Hollywood. Tracey Ullman does an impression of how she'd look with enhanced lips. Frances McDormand, discovered by chance in a hotel bathroom, tells why she plans to. remain surgery-free: One day they'll need an actress to play a 54-year-old, she reasons, and no actress will actually look 54 — so she'll have a corner on the market.

Eventually, Arquette "finds" Winger. They sit in a backyard and discuss why Winger left—although she did make a brief comeback in a movie this year by husband Arliss Howard.

The roles weren't there, Winger says, and she chose to take care of her kids. "Anybody who says having kids isn't a sacrifice is lying."

As an example of her feelings about Hollywood, Winger, now 46, tells how when she was filming "An Officer and a Gentleman" in her 20s, the producer came to her trailer with an envelope. She hoped it was to compliment her.

"You look a little bloated in the rushes," he said. The envelope contained a water retention pill.

Motherhood

Diane Lane says she is so busy with career and motherhood that she doesn't have time for a man. Meg Ryan says she's never been happier, "and it's not about a guy." But French star Emanuelle Beart, beautiful even with messy hair and a cigarette in her mouth, seems to ooze melancholy when she muses that she dreams of "having a man come to take me and my children away." *AP*

Jackson gets a thrill out of 'Star Wars' role

LONDON—Hollywood star Samuel L. Jackson got his big break playing a crack cocaine addict in "Jungle Fever" but says his own wild days of drink and drugs are well behind him.

Jackson, in London to promote his latest film "Star Wars: Episode II—Attack of the Clones," said in an interview published on Thursday that he decided to kick his cocaine and tequila habit after his wife found him lying in a heap under the kitchen table.

Sobriety

"I was tired. I was real tired. I'd tried everything else and I figured the one thing I hadn't tried was sobriety," the 53-year-old actor told the Daily Telegraph.

"I wanted to get better. What most people don't realize is that you can't do that unless you want to. People who get sent to rehab because of their jobs or pressure from their families end up back in rehab."

The famously cool actor received an Oscar nomination for his role in the 1994 film "Pulp Fiction." But he said it wasn't until George Lucas offered him a small part in the first Star Wars prequel, 1999's "Star Wars: Episode 1—The Phantom Menace," that he truly felt "I've arrived."

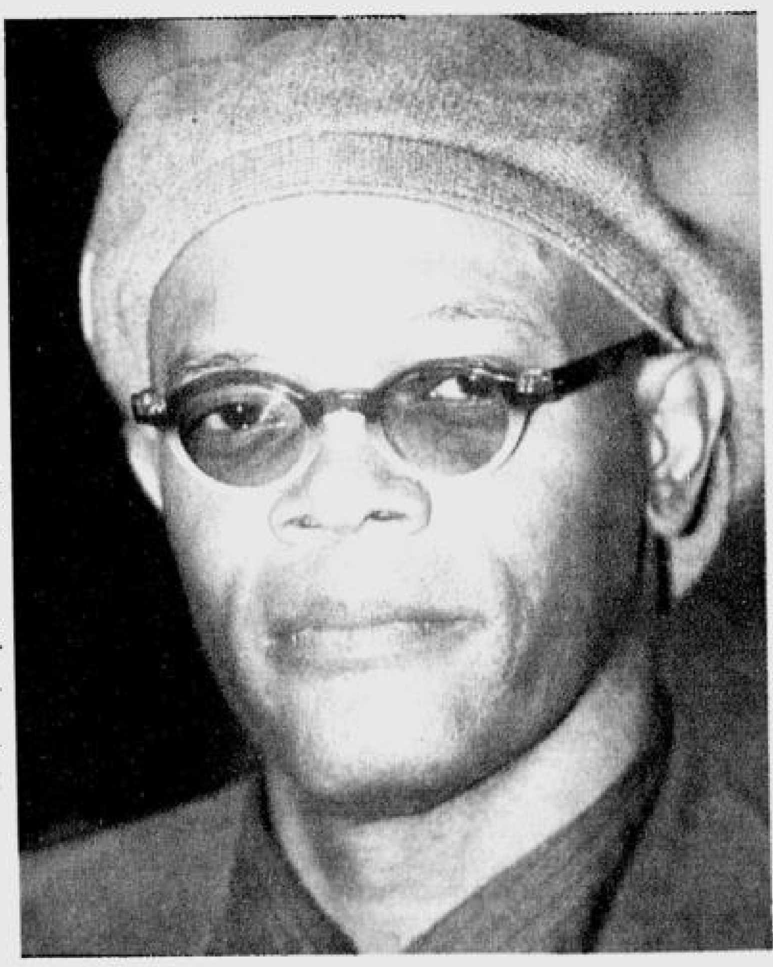
More substantial

"It's for everyone who has a kid inside them, everyone who has ever imagined they were the hero." His role as a Jedi Master in "Attack of the Clones" is more substantial and he got a big kick out of playing around with the film's trademark light sabres.

"Having a great light-sabre battle kinda fulfils all those Errol Flynn and Hong Kong movie fantasies I have about swords," he said.

"It replaces all the high adventure pirate movies I watched as a kid. I finally get to fight in these incredible scenes."

Hard-core followers of Jedi Knights and galactic princesses have for weeks eaten, drunk and slept in queues outside theaters for the newest adventure in one of the biggest box office franchises in movie-making history. *Reuters*



JACKSON. Errol Flynn fantasies.

'The Other Side of Heaven' is a sweet coming-of-age tale

By Sheila Norman-Culp

NEW YORK—If God wants you to go to Tonga, what do you say?

"Yes!" says John Groberg, an Idaho farm boy who deftly navigates a foreign culture as a Mormon missionary in Mitch Davis' sweet coming-of-age tale "The Other Side of Heaven."

The film opens in 1953 at Brigham Young University, and Groberg (Christopher Gorham) is a young Mormon horn player who doesn't like that his girlfriend Jean (Anne Hathaway of "The Princess Diaries" fame) is dancing with another guy. So he hops off the stage and takes her to a nearby park—where they clamber onto a children's swing.

Knowing that his years-long stint as a missionary was coming up soon, he assures her: "We'll be under the same moon."

But what Groberg doesn't know forms the heart of this wry, gentle comedy. The young man who had never before seen an ocean would spend several months on the world's largest—traveling to the tiny Pacific island of Niuatoputapu, part of Tonga. Preaching to a village in which only one person spoke English, he would find customs that were, shall we say, quite different from Idaho Falls. And he would miss Jean terribly.

Based on Groberg's memoir, "The Other Side of Heaven" is truly a family-friendly film.

For those weaned on racier fare, special effects and sarcastic retorts, the movie could be a snore. For those unaccustomed to a frank acknowledgment of one's faith, it could be a bit preachy.

But the humor is universal (What should a religious 19-year-old do when a local maiden takes off her sarong?), the Pacific island setting is spectacular, and the true-life story has its intriguing aspects.

Groberg faced real challenges 50 years ago. The island had no electricity or medical supplies and villagers were left on the edge of starvation after a typhoon roared through and devastated the crops. Young Tongan women were sometimes sold off for nothing more than cases of rum and a rival preacher was none too pleased at Groberg's arrival, sending goons to beat him up. *AP*

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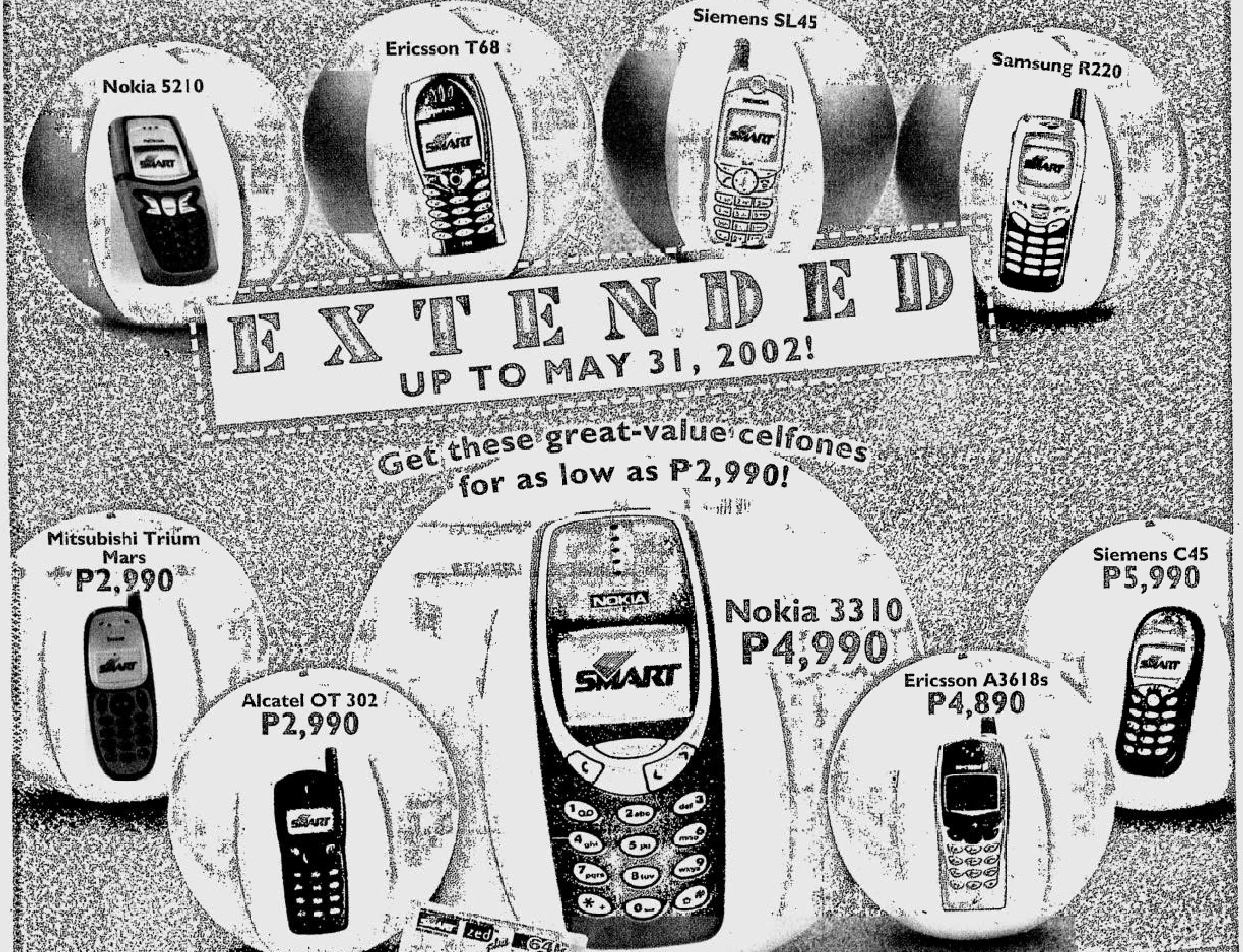

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Per DTI-NCR Permit Nos. 1426, 0581, 0519 & 0955 Series of 2002.

Remembering Lino Brocka, 11 years after his death

BROCKA worked backstage for the UP Dramatic Club in 1956.

By Behn Cervantes

IT was 1956. Green as freshmen though we were, a number of us had the gall to answer the auditions call of the UP Dramatic Club, a very prestigious association of thespians at the University of the Philippines under the tutelage of the renowned playwright Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero.

Alumni

He was Freddie to his alumni who included Celia Diaz Laurel, Joe Viterbo, Mitos Sison, Doy Laurel, Angelita Collas, Joy Gamboa Virata, Marce and Kit Viduya, Jose 'Jun' Roy, Tito Gupit, Cherry Santos and Phil Cabanos, who designied his sets. Engineering student Sonny Osmeña did his lights.

No wonder freshmen like Jose Ma. Sison, Pinky Rigor Farolan, Bobbie Malay Ocampo, George Moran Sison, Donnie Montelibano and myself auditioned for his new production of Thornton Wilder's "A Happy Journey From Trenton To Camden." We were cast.

Also included was one Catalino Brocka from San Jose, Nueva Ecija. Most of the new members were graduates of Ateneo, La Salle, UP High or UP Prep. Since we spoke English well we were excused from doing the "She sells seashells by the seashore" and "Peter Piper' exercises. Brocka had to go through them.

After extensive and exciting auditions we were cast in the play that would be twin-billed with Sartre's "No Exit," an existentialist play hat reaped critical praise during its summer run. Its cast was headed by Jun Roy, Rita Kalaw Ledesma and Phil Cabanos. Kit Viduya was a spellbinding Estelle.

Years later, Lino, Joonee Gamboa, Adul de Leon and I had become a gang of theater

REMEMBERING/ p. F2

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Focus on Adam Garcia

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

AUSTRALIAN actor Adam Garcia didn't play the protagonist in "Cayote Ugly," but he effectively stole the movie from its lead star, Piper Perabo. He did this without even trying, because he was blessed with both good looks and talent.

Later on, we would learn that he was even more talented than his performance in "Cayote Ugly" had indicated. It turned out that he was an outstanding singer and actor as well, as proven by the rave reviews he got for his performance as Tony Manero in the West End production of "Saturday Night Fever."

Garcia also did well in the all-dancing film "Bootmen," where he played a young steelworker who leaves his job to become a tap dancer.

He is also featured in the cast albums of "Hair" (singing the part of Wolf) and "Fiddler on the Roof" (Perchik).

His latest films are "Riding in Cars with Boys" with Drew Barrymore, and "The First $20 Million Is Always the Hardest," a comedy about four geeks who develop the ultimate network computer.

Viewers who aren't familiar with Garcia's work can catch up by watching "Cayote Ugly" today at 7:15 p.m. on Star Movies, and "Bootmen" at 9 p.m. on June 2.

These two films will serve as a good introduction to the young talent who has been dubbed the new John Travolta.

Padre Pio's canonization

We're currently directing a play on the Roman Catholic Church's newest saint, Padre Pio, so we've been getting queries not just about the play, but also about other activities related to the canonization.

In this regard, we're sharing the information that Journeys of Faith, Inc. is offering an 11-day pilgrimage covering the canonization of Blessed Padre Pio at the Vatican on June 16.

Pilgrimage dates are from June 14 to 24, and shall cover Rome, Pietrelcina, San Giovanni Rotondo, the St. Michael the Archangel shrine in Foggia, Loreto, Assisi, Florence, Pisa and Lourdes.

Bishop Raul Martinez leads the group as pilgrimage chaplain. Deadline for reservations is on Friday, May 31. Call Arlina at 929-0144 or 929-0155.

As for performances and sponsorships of the play, "Sundin ang Loob Mo'—Padre Pio," please call Pablo at 713-9323 or 0917-9893089.

MTV nominees

The nominees in the Best Director and Best Video categories of MTV Pilipinas 2002 have been announced:

Best Director--Monti Parungao, "Money for Food," Barbie's Cradle. Rico Gutierrez, "Your Puppet and Clown," Greyhoundz. Lyle Sacris, "Umaaraw, Umuulan," Rivermaya. Robert Quebral, "Sumasarap ang Gising," Truefaith. Louie Ignacio, "To Reach You," Regine Velasquez.

Best Video--Wolfgang, "Meckam." Cheese, "Mottaka." Greyhoundz, "Your Puppet and Clown." Rivermaya, "Umaaraw, Umuulan."

Two special awards will also be given: the Most Favorite Love Ballad presented by Light Blue Dolce and Gabbana Parfum, and the Most Stylish Music Video award presented by Jag Jeans.

The Music Achievement Award will also be presented to Parokya ni Edgar by MTV and All-new Selecta Cornetto.

The MTV Pilipinas 2002 awards night will be telecast at 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 29, with repeats on July 1 at 6 p.m., July 5 at noontime, July 7 at 9 p.m. and July 13 at 9 p.m.

Summer fiesta revelry

San MIguel Beer's "Sarap to Sundown Summer 2002" tour next goes to Naga's Kaogma Festival until May 26, and the town of Balanghai in Butuan, also until May 26.

GARCIA. Blessed with good looks and talent.

Back in Luzon, there's the Pasayahan sa Lucena from May 27 to 29. Feel the rhythm of the fiesta beat with this three-day celebration, made even more exciting by SMB.

Thus far, SMB's summer fiesta promo tour has toasted revelers in Vigan, Pangasinan, Bulacan, Lucban, Tayabas, Sariaya, Subic, Malate, Makati, Quezon City, Iloilo, Cebu, Tagbilaran and Davao.

Ongoing until May 31 is the Magayon Festival in Legaspi, Albay, and SMB is there, too!

'Star for a Night'

Tonight's singing contestants on "Star for a Night" (IBC-13, 8 p.m.) are Katherine Refieses, Camille Relevo, Angeline Quinto and Ramil Guerrero.

The winner gets P50,000 and a slot in the monthly competition, where the winner gets P100,000. Regine Velasquez hosts the talent search, now on its second month.

Events at the Pen

The ongoing 2002 Events at the Pen (The Peninsula Manila) will be capped today by two fashion shows at the Rigodon Ballroom (at 4 and 7 p.m.).

Featured are the corporate line of Maidenform, JC Buendia, Mel Vengel de Dios and Njork, Gerry Katigbak, Vittorio Barba and Njork, Natori, Edgar Madamba, Len Nepomuceno-Guia, Patrice Ramos Diaz, Randy Ortiz and Paul Cabral.

The Pen events also feature experts in bridal fashions, floral design, corporate giveaways, and wedding planning presented in cooperation with Rita Neri of The Wedding Store.

Remembering Lino Brocka . . .

From p. F1

buffs. We would see films together and compare insights. We were mesmerized by Simone Signoret's quiet but seething dramatic intensity in "Room at the Top." We recognized that same intensity and seamless acting in Kit, still one of my favorite stage actresses to this day. Lino was her great fan and friend, too. In fact, for a while Lino was sort of adopted by the Viduya couple and often slept in their little bungalow in San Juan.

Lino quit the play because during our first rehearsal he screamed a line that made the whole cast and crew guffaw. He yelled, *"Awe mudder, mudder luk at dat gel weering a batting chute!" I didn't know till much later that he was humiliated by our laughter and thus quit the play.*

Instead, he worked backstage. He swept the stage, cleaned the acting area and threw away our pee collected in small Coke bottles backstage. He also did the curtain raising and prompted the cast when needed.

Joonee and I also sort of adopted Lino. We helped him with his English and when he couldn't get cast in a UP play, we moved to the Arena Theater under Severino Montano and appeared in Montano and Tony Bayot plays. Lino got honed there.

Morality play

I resigned from the club in protest over the constant use of alumni rather than resident UP Dramatic Club members so Lino was finally cast in a morality play "Second Shepherd's Play" with the gorgeous Dee Marquez, then the star of Philippine television, portraying Mary.

When there was no money for tuition, Lino would drop out of school. Adul de Leon, who was now working with PR Bill Kane, got him a job as a script boy for Hollywood films shot here that included "Walls of Hell" or "Intramuros" for the domestic run. It starred Jock Mahoney, a former Tarzan, and Fernando Poe, Jr.

Eddie Romero, who also worked with the group, told me that Lino did three more of those films. He would often ask me to visit him on the set, where he was busy, indeed.

Adul and he had also worked as disc jockeys for Muzak. They played soothing music for Manila Hotel patrons from the studio located on the ground floor. It was right in front of the then popular watering hole Jungle Bar where a Miss Manila later legendary as Carmen Soriano was developing her inimitable singing style.

Booth

In that glass-enclosed booth we would gawk at Manila's 400 going to the Fiesta Pavillion for the Kahirup grand balls or those charity fashion shows.

He was converted to the Mormon religion in 1962. A couple of Mormon missionaries were vainly trying to talk my Protestant parents into accepting its merits. Sympathizing with the proselytizing duo, I made an appointment to see them at some other time. I asked Lino, who was jobless then, to accompany me. We thought it was an amusing experience.

Another appointment was set but I no longer went. Lino, however, was free so he continued to see them until one day he found himself in a big pool. He was baptized by the missionaries and thanked me for helping him "see the light". He was soon sent to Honolulu for missionary work. I was at the East West Center by then so he once surprised me outside my classroom in a white shirt and tie and black pants, the uniform Mormon missionaries wear.

Problems

Lino had a mind of his own so it was not surprising that he had problems with the superiors of his church. He was "exiled" to far-off Molokai where he would write me long letters complaining about the restrictive system and his dull missionary buddy.

He came home a year after I returned for a sabbatical. He wanted to do something in the meantime so I got him to join PETA. It was during that time that we had a falling out.

I cast him in a Grey November play for Ishmael's Wednesday happening. He came late for the performance so we had a mini-spat that developed further when I questioned his appointment as a director of a Nestor Torre play. As a result we didn't speak for about 14 years!

In the years between, I had joined the parliament of the streets. He had become an acclaimed film director.

BROCKA and the author were arrested during a transport strike in 1985.

It was only in 1983 that we worked together again in MAPCO (Movement to Abolish the Presidential Commitment Order) and MAPDA (Movement to Abolish the Preventive Detention Arrest).

Members

After that, we again worked together in Free The Artists: Free The Media just a few months before Aug. 21 when Ninoy Aquino was assassinated. We helped establish the Concerned Artists of the Philippines and were members of the National Council of Bayan.

Lino and I were detained after a well-publicized arrest during a transport strike in 1985. We spent ample time together in the Quezon City Jail and Camp Bonifacio where we reminisced about our salad years, recalled old friends and reminded ourselves of our spats.

That was water under the bridge. We had not only become friends again, we had become comrades. Lino died 11 years ago. We have yet to find someone to take his place. There is still so much to be done!

'Late Marriage' is an assured first feature

By Christy Lemire

NEW YORK—If you've heard of "Late Marriage," you've heard of its sex scene. So let's talk about it right off the top, just to get it out of the way.

Protracted encounter

The protracted encounter is probably the most realistic ever depicted on film—utterly devoid of the flowery contrivances of more romantic films, and equally lacking in the staged raunchiness of porn.

Zaza (Lior Ashkenazi) and his secret lover, Judith (Ronit Elkabetz), have known each other intimately for a while, and they're completely comfortable with their nudity. They speak frankly about what they're doing, and if the sex is a bit mechanical at times, it's only because they've been together so long, they don't need to impress each other to feel secure in their love.

Writer-director Dover Kosashvili approaches the rest of the film with the same realism that makes the scene so remarkable. The movie is so no-nonsense, so assured, it's hard to believe this is his first feature.

Light humor

Kosashvili dares to infuriate us with a story that begins with light humor, then grows dark quickly before ending on the blackest possible note.

Zaza is 31 and unmarried, and as such is a complete disgrace to his fellow Georgian immigrants living in Tel Aviv. A smart, good-looking guy—he resembles a young Joe Namath—he's studying to get his doctorate in philosophy.

So his parents are baffled as to why he's rejected every marriage they've tried to arrange for him. But they don't want him to marry just any girl. She has to be young, beautiful, from a good family—and a virgin, of course. In an early scene that's simultaneously amusing and appalling, his family sits around a coffee table with the family of a 17-year-old prospect, talking about her as if she were a car they were haggling over at a dealership.

But when Zaza's parents spy on him one night, with aunts and uncles following in a second car, they realize why he's been so reluctant to marry: Zaza is in love with Judith, who's 34, divorced, and the mother of a 6-year-old girl.

This is even more disgraceful than being a bachelor at 31 in the eyes of Zaza's parents, Yasha (Moni Moshonov) and Lily (Lili Kosashvili, the director's mother). The family stakes out her apartment, then confronts her when they know he's there. They trash her home, call her obscene names and threaten to kill her in front of her little girl; the brutality and viciousness of the scene make it agonizing to watch.

Dependent

Yasha and Lily treat their son just as harshly, saying he's not a man, spitting on him and threatening to cut him off financially (as a full-time student, he's still dependent on them).

And so Zaza is forced to choose between his family and tradition, and the woman he loves and real happiness.

"My Big Fat Greek Wedding" recently covered similar ground, focusing on a Greek woman in Chicago who's still single at 30, then falls in love with a man who isn't Greek. But that was a Hollywood romantic comedy. There's no way it could end badly.

Kosashvili is totally unflinching about the film's outcome. A Georgian who's lived in Israel for the past 30 years, he says he based the script on a true story a friend told him about a divorced Moroccan mother of two who fell in love with a Georgian man. It also ended badly.

"Late Marriage," a Magnolia Pictures release, is not rated but contains graphic nudity and sexuality, some violence and language. The film is in Georgian and Hebrew with English subtitles. Running time: 100 minutes. Three stars (out of four). *AP*

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MONTGOMERY PLACE

Alma Moreno makes a comeback

By Remy M. Umerez

ON A scorching Thursday afternoon, we found ourselves visiting the set of "Kapalit," the initial offering of Jaggs Productions, with Mel Chionglo directing. It marks the return of onetime sex goddess Alma Moreno to the big screen after many years' absence.

Illusion

The story in a nutshell: Rebecca (Alma) believes she is happily married to Edwin (Victor Neri), by whom she has a child. The illusion of happiness is shattered when Edwin meets a vehicular accident and loses his leg. Killed in the accident is his companion Violeta (Michelle Quizon), who happens to be his mistress.

The death of Violeta shocks her husband Vincent (Jay Manalo) who was also under the belief that his was a happy marriage, despite their childlessness.

The accident sends Rebecca and Vincent into each other's arms for answers about what went wrong with their marriage.

Alma sits beside Boots Anson-Roa, who plays Alma's mother-in-law, who despises her a lot.

Broadcasting

Boots reveals that she teaches Broadcasting at the Ateneo de Manila once a week. She has about 20 students.

"Kapalit" has five more shooting days to go and Alma can't help feeling sad.

"Everybody is very supportive. *Sa totoo lang,* I've truly missed acting and the camaraderie on the set. On my first shooting day, I was excited and frightened at the same time. I asked myself, *marunong pa kaya akong umarte?,"* she reveals.

Her sources of strength were Boots Anson-Roa and director Mel who believes that Alma is more than just a sexy body.

What pleases Alma is the fact that the movie is not exploitative, although there are some sexy scenes. She believes in the project because it is more drama than bold.

Multiple sclerosis

Despite suffering from multiple sclerosis, Alma appears to be in the pink to health. She still possess an enviable figure.

"It is bad if I tire myself too much. It is the headaches that bother me because they are like migraines. But I have learned to surrender everything to the Lord. Another therapy for me is dancing, which is why I have this group called Kit Kats," Alma says.

Despite all of the personal tragedies she's suffered, Alma is grateful for one thing: She's discovered how much she is loved by her children.

MORENO with co-star Victor Neri.

Maryo J de los Reyes directs wholesome movie, for a change

By Edmund L. Sicam

DIRECTOR Maryo de los Reyes breaks away from his usual movies which portray the seamy side of life and goes wholesome in "I Think I'm in Love" starring Joyce Jimenez and Piolo Pascual. At the presscon for the movie, we interviewed the award-winning director about his latest project but discovered he had more to say about bold movies and bold stars.

STARS of "I Think I'm In Love": Nancy Castiglione, Joyce Jimenez, Piolo Pascual and Michelle Bayle.

Where do you find bold stars these days?

Mas expansive *ngayon.* I was surprised, there was one woman who approached me, she's now 18 years old, and she said, "I want to be a sexy actress." The mother was with her, *nakipag*-appointment *sila. Ang sabi ko,* "Attuned *ba ang utak mo na maghuhubad ka?" "Opo." Malinaw yung sagot niya.*

Job

Sexy *siya. Sabi ni* Mother, *magpapayat ka muna.* Now she's slimming down. *Yun. Nasa utak nila, e.* I guess it's the generation. *Mas* outgoing, *mas* liberal minded. *Atsaka, desidido sila magtrabaho.* They look upon it as a profession, as a job.

How do you audition sexy stars? Do you make them undress?

No, *nakikita mo naman kung may* appeal *na kaagad* just by looking, and then, eventually, you give them a pictorial. *Doon sa* pictorial *makikita yung mga* body defects... *tapos, una yan, mag* two piece, *tapos ibabawas...* you first show them *kung anong damit na susuotin nila... kung walang damit, kung kumot lang... kung papayag sila.*

Why did many of our good actresses start out as bold stars? Is it good training for acting?

Because the material is richer. Because wholesome roles are less challenging, there's less meat to them. While the material on the sex side is more challenging and meatier... they can really sink their teeth into it. And, let's face it—we're in Asia, *ang* selling factor *pa rin* is sex and violence, patterned after the Hollywood approach. While in Hollywood, the market is wider, they are willing to experiment more on themes that are not ordinary.

In movies, there are a lot of heterosexual sex scenes being directed by gay directors. ***Ano ang*** **effect** ***noon,*** **if any, on the way the scene comes out on screen?**

Sabi nila, pag gay director *daw, mas malandi ang* sex scene. While if it is done by a hetero, it's very straightforward, it's too graphic. I look at it from the point of view of an artist *lang...* it doesn't matter which sex handles it, as long as the intention is there.

Your sex scenes are some of the most explicit in Filipino movies. Don't you feel you're taking a risk, in terms of censorship?

I never want to edit myself.... *Lagi sinasabi ng mga* production manager *ko, o kaya ng* producer, *"Makakalusot ba ito, direk?" Sabi ko kasi, pag yun ang inisip mo, wala na tayong gagawin.* I don't want to edit myself, because that is the worst thing an artist can experience, to stifle his creativity.

DE LOS REYES. Sex still sells in Asia.

Is it hard to direct a heterosexual in a gay scene?

I interview the actor first and discuss the scene with him. And if I find that he is uncomfortable, it's either I change him, or if he cites a certain restriction, if I'm willing to compromise, I do.

Have most of your gay scenes been acted out by heterosexuals?

In "Paraiso ni Efren," *wala namang* homosexual *doon, e.* It's their commitment as actors, it's their rawness as performers. Because these are the actors who tread the dangerous side.

Parang kasi **we're very personality oriented, actors always have an image to protect. So if you do a gay scene, viewers might think you are actually gay...**

I think it is within the sociocultural milieu or something like it's imbedded *sa utak ng Pilipino,* that's why I also question the hypocrisy of the Filipino. It's also the religious influence, *e. Kaya nakaka*-restrict.

Wholesome image

Going back to your question of *bakit natatakot sila mag-portray... totoo yun. Maraming mga artista* who identify themselves with a certain wholesome image... they really restrict themselves. They say, "I cannot go beyond... I cannot cross the line, *direk..."* I hope *yung utak nila, mas mag*-open, and go beyond the star system, and they grow as actors.

Ayen Munji-Laurel launches album at Music Museum concert May 29

MONTAGE

AFTER launching her self-titled maiden album, Ayen Munji-Laurel is now gearing up for her grand album launching, an invitational concert on May 29 at the Music Museum.

"Ayen," the album, is a collection of soothing love songs that include "Pag-Ibig Lang, "One Last Goodbye," "Here in My Heart," "Laging Mayroong Bukas, "You're My Everything," "Not While I'm Around (with Martin Nievera) and the carrier single, "Bawat Gabi." The music video of "Bawat Bukas" is now being aired on local and cable channels.

Piolo and Jericho endorse new scents

Young stars Piolo Pascual and Jericho Rosales have signed up as endorsers of new fragrances for men from Sara Lee Direct Selling. Piolo ia promoting "The Boy Next Door," the scent that exudes sensitivity and warmth, while Jericho is the pitchman for "Mr. Nice Guy," the fragrance that explores fun and being cool.

'Beneath Loch Ness'

Now screening in Metro Manila theaters is "Beneath Loch Ness," about Prof. Gus Egan and a team of scientists who explore the depths of Scotland's famed Loch Ness to prove that it was once a prehistoric breeding ground for ancient marine reptiles. When a fault line deep below the surface of the lake ruptures, Gus disappears in an underwater avalanche. What no one realizes is that the rupture has opened a passageway to the depths of the North Sea and given rise to the most fearsome creature ever known to man, the fabled Leviathan.

AYEN. Invitational show.

The adventure movie stars Patrick Bergin, Brian Wimmer and Lysette Anthony.

Kylie Minogue on Star World

Star World, now back on Sky and Home Cable, airs "An Audience with Kylie Minogue" on May 28 at 8 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. and to celebrate the occasion, two pairs of lucky winners will be whisked away to Barcelona, Spain to see Kylie perform live in concert on June 18, 2002.

'Black Hawk Down' now on video

From action producer Jerry Bruckheimer and director Ridley Scott comes the gripping true story about bravery, camaraderie and the complex reality of war--"Black Hawk Down," winner of two Academy Awards, for Best Sound and Best Film Editing.

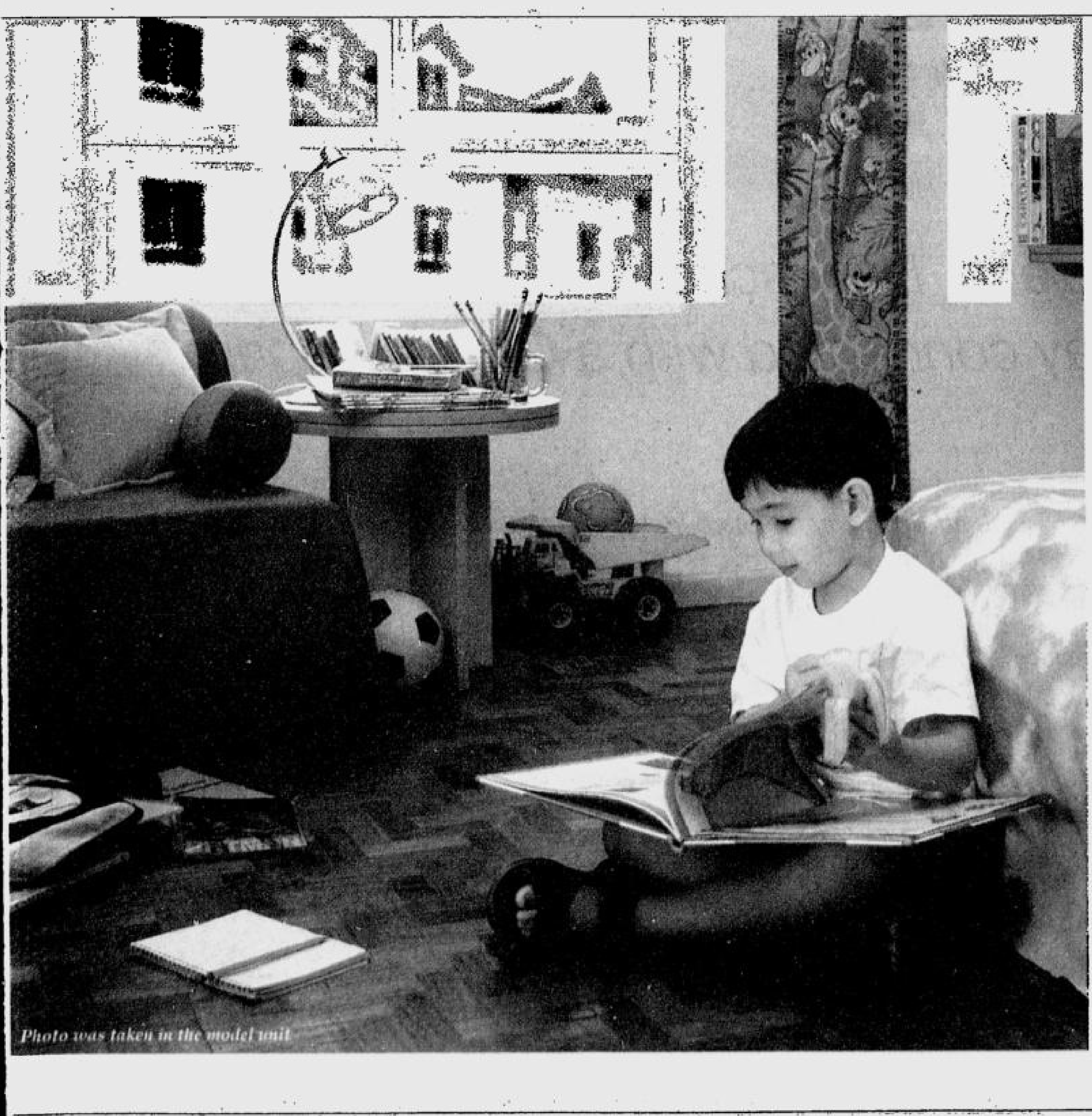
The movie is a true account of US military action in Mogadishu, Somalia. As part of a UN peacekeeping force, a group of elite US soldiers undertakes a mission to abduct several top lieutenants of a Soamlian warlord to end the civil war that has been tearing the country apart.

"Black Hawk Down" is now available on VHS, VCD and DVD formats.

Bosson's new album

Bosson's repackaged album "One in a Million," released by Universal Records on Avex Trax label, has spawned a new hit, "Over the Mountains."

Bosson is no newcomer in the music business. He has toured with pop star Britney Spears and LFO. His first worlwide hit single "One in a Million," from his album of the same title, was nominated "Best Original Song" in the Golden Globes for the Sandra Bullock movie "Miss Congeniality." *(Compiled by Edmund L. Sicam)*



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LYNCH. Exceptional relationship. AFP

David Lynch awarded France's Legion of Honor

CANNES, France—US director David Lynch, who is also head of the jury at this year's Cannes Film Festival, was given France's highest medal, the Legion of Honor, Sunday during a ceremony here.

"It's a way for France to show its admiration and its gratitude to him and at the same time highlight the exceptional relationship he has with the Cannes festival," French Culture Minister Jean-Jacques Aillagon said.

Conviction

"The homage we are giving to David Lynch is an expression of our country's very strong conviction that cinema is something essential to culture," he said.

Lynch himself won Cannes' Palme d'Or prize in 1990 for his "Wild at Heart," and last year walked away with the Best Director prize for "Mulholland Drive." The 56-year-old enigmatic director said: "Sometimes in life you are given some wonderful gifts. That's the case for me today and I am very honored." He called the French "the biggest lovers and biggest defenders of art in the world." *AFP*

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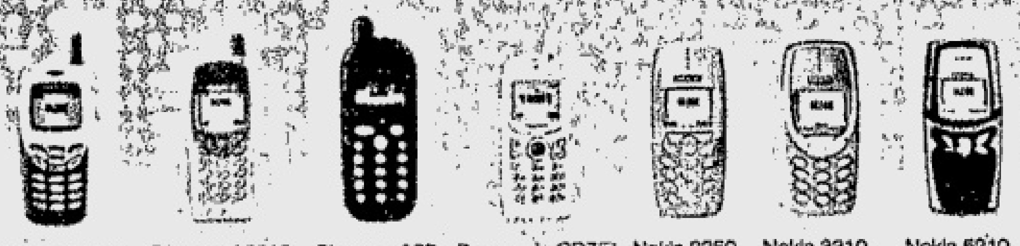

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SATURDAY*Special*

Cesar Montano, show biz survivor

By Nestor U. Torre

FOR months now, Cesar Montano's stellar acting career has been in the doldrums. Show biz analysts "blame" that low period on these factors:

Pointed remarks

—Cesar's lashing out at the jurors who didn't give his film, "Ang Bagong Buwan," top honors at last December's Metro Manila Film Festival. His pointed remarks were resented and prompted an unspoken freeze on film offers and awards for him.

—His penchant for not just acting in a movie, but also line-producing it, and even involving himself in its direction. Producers took all of this when his movies were hits, but when some of them did less well at the tills, they got fed up.

—Cesar has had tiffs not just with filmfest jurors, but also with some directors, thus further limiting the number of roles that have been offered to him.

New comedy show

—He chose not to continue his TV sitcom with Maricel Soriano, and turned down a new comedy show, thus making himself scarce even on the tube. Since TV is a very popular medium these days, Cesar's lack of a regular show has worsened his "out of sight, out of mind" status in the industry.

One good outcome of Cesar's relative inactivity on the big and small screen was his being free to serve as narrator of the "Lakas Sambayanan" TV documenatry shown to great acclaim some months ago.

Big boost

Cesar's star value was a big boost to the docu's viewership, and the fact that he donated his services to the production won him a lot of praise and appreciation.

Thus, even if his acting career isn't doing as swimmingly as before, Cesar is by no means yesterday's news. Some people may want to see him permanently out of local show biz's top stellar ranks, but he's too talented and experienced a star to oblige. He may eventually ease himself out

CESAR/ p. G2

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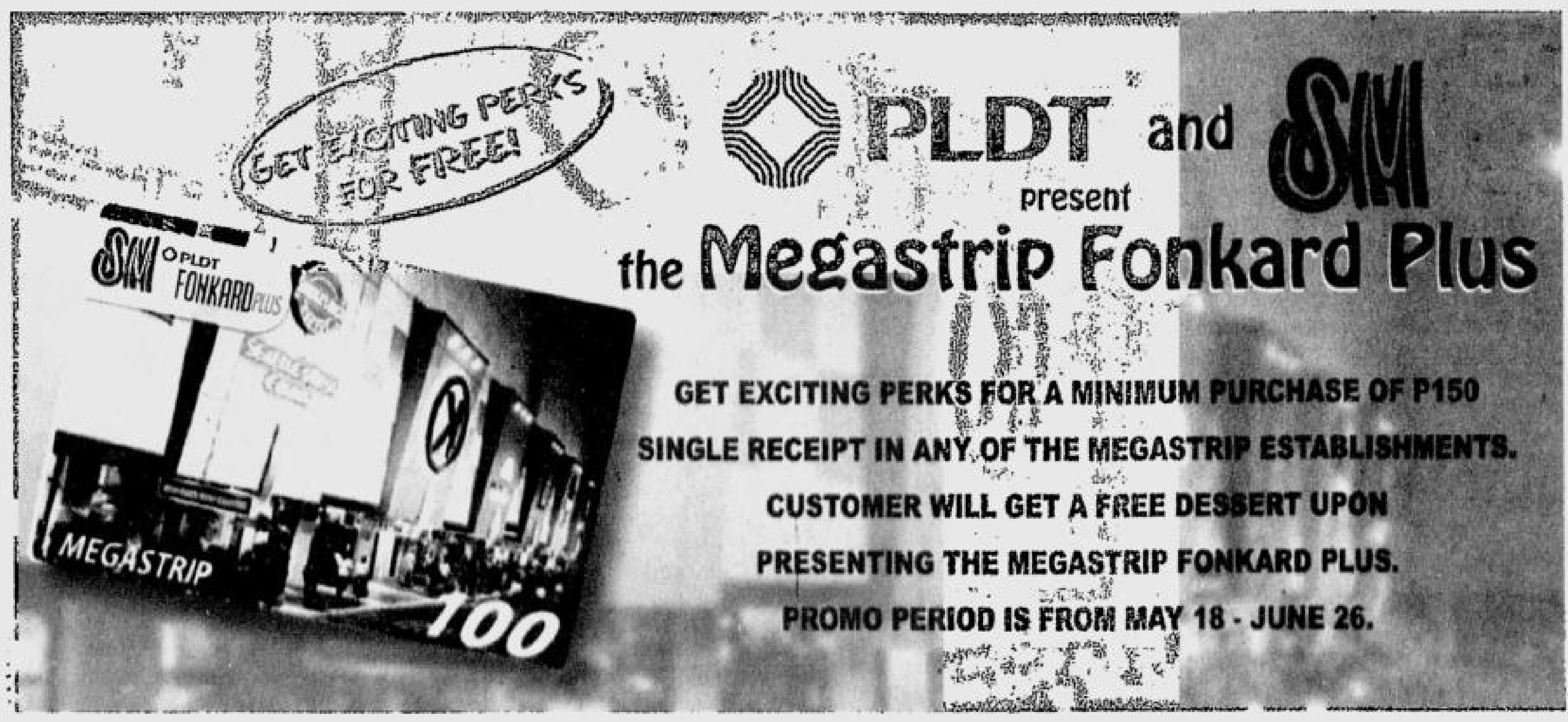
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Rosie O'Donnell takes a bow from daytime TV

LOS ANGELES—Talk show host Rosie O'Donnell, who used her love of trivia and laid-back humor to challenge Oprah Winfrey on daytime television, took her final bow on the small screen on Wednesday as her show prepared to leave the airwaves.

Heartfelt finale

The stand-up comic, children's advocate and Broadway lover from Long Island delivered a heartfelt finale filled with the things that gave her show its distinctive flavor.

Her final performance began with O'Donnell, who recently revealed that she is gay, singing "And now it's time to say goodbye" to the tune of "Lullaby of Broadway." That was followed by a Broadway-style song and dance ode to Rosie sung to the tune of "Hello Dolly." Guests at the final farewell were relatively few, and included Nathan Lane, who talked lightheartedly with Rosie about her coming out.

"I didn't know you were gay," Lane quipped. "If I had known, I would have looked for you at the meetings." O'Donnell's other guest, Christine Ebersole, later serenaded the talk show host with a rendition of "My Funny Valentine." O'Donnell also showed clips of past guests, including Barbra Streisand, Cher and Tom Cruise, the last a constant topic on her shows over the years as the subject of a major crush.

Lemonade

When O'Donnell came out and said she was gay, some asked about the crush, to which she replied she never meant she wanted to have sex with the actor, but rather wanted him to cut her lawn and serve her lemonade.

In a nod to that remark, the finale closed with a clip of a man in the distance mowing the lawn, moving a little closer with each successive pass until it's apparent he is none other than Tom Cruise.

"Hi Rosie," Cruise says, holding out a glass for the camera. "I cut your lawn. Here's your lemonade."

O'Donnell quickly rose to fame when her show premiered six years ago, challenging the stranglehold on daytime television long held by the more serious-minded Oprah Winfrey.

O'DONNELL, third from right, bids farewell to her TV audience.

She delighted audiences with her mix of segments on everyday people, trivia and celebrity guests and most of all with her easy-going humor.

But O'Donnell, a gun control advocate, also generated controversy when she challenged actor Tom Selleck to defend his pro-gun stance in what Selleck later called an unfair attack during his 1999 appearance on the show. *Reuters*

Rudy Fernandez and Ara Mina team up anew in 'Diskarte'

By Edmund L. Sicam

RUDY Fernandez and Ara Mina team up once again in an action flick, "Diskarte," Maverick Films' entry to the Manila Film Festival in June. They were first seen together in the action-drama "Palaban" a couple of years ago. Has Rudy noticed any changes in Ara since they last worked together?

Maturity

"*Ang laki ng* improvement *ni* Ara in terms of physique. *Dati, medyo* chubby *siya. Dito, ang ganda ng katawan niya!* Sexy! *Nagkaroon siya ng konting* maturity, *may* depth *na yung* approach *niya.*" Ara plays Rudy's girlfriend in the film. She's a GRO. But the twist is, Ara's sister is the girlfriend of the big boss of the syndicate they're trying to bring down.

How were his bed scenes with Ara? "*Okay, nakakatuwa. Ibang klase yung* director *namin, ginawang* wild *ng konti yung mga* love scenes *namin. Wala namang* butt exposure. *Wala na akong* butt, *e.*" Rudy laughs heartily. Will it pass at PG-13, or will it be an R-18? "*Kami, kung sa* PG-13 *papasa,* good. *Pero kung hindi,* OK *lang.* Definitely it's not for general patronage." R because of the violence, or because of the sex? "Probably because of the sex. *Malamang,* R-18 *yan.*"

So what does Lorna T think of the wild, rated R-18" sex scenes with Ara Mina? Doesn't she get jealous, or angry? "*Napanood niya yung* trailer, *hindi pa yung* movie.

FERNANDEZ. No political plans, for now.

Mellow *na siya ngayon. Mas malawak na ang kanyang* understanding." Well, yes, he and Lorna have been married around 20 years now . . . what's their secret? "*Pagmamahal, hindi mawawala yon,* and putting the Lord in the center of the relationship."

Temptation

But how does Rudy avoid temptation? Especially since he works with so many sexy sirens?" It's a matter of conviction. *Kailangan talaga* you have that. *Tsaka,* my heart belongs to my wife. *Relihiyoso ako, e... ayokong gumawa ng kasalanan...*" How about professional jealousy, does that exist between them? Does it matter that Lorna's won more acting awards than he has? "*Okay lang kung manalo si* Lorna, *dahil tinuturuan ko yan gabi-gabi...*" he laughs again. "*Kaya pag nanalo siya, parang, tama yung tinuro mo, di ba?*"

How about his experience in politics, what did Rudy learn from that? "Mas mahirap ang politics, *ang magsilbi . . . kahit hindi naging* successful *yung* attempt *ko,* okay *lang.* The experience was very enriching. *Nakikita mo yung paghihirap ng tao . . .* No regrets *na pumasok ako. Marami akong naging kaibigan na hanggang ngayon, kaibigan ko pa rin . . . nakilala ko sa* politics."

Does he plan to make another foray in the future? "*Sa ngayon, wala sa isip ko yan.* Focus *ko sa pelikula ulit,* as an actor...*Naghahanda pa ako ng* next project, *ng magandang* material."

Hard action

What's difficult about being this long in the business is that it's hard to find new things to do, Rudy explains. Sometimes he's reading a script and realizes, "*Nagawa ko na yan!*" So would he do comedy for a change? "*Diskarte ko*—hard action *na muna . . . Hindi naman puwede* completely *maiba...*"

Would he consider a role where he would be a really, really evil character—like Denzel Washington in "Training Day," where he was the *contravida,* but in a lead role. "Yes. Actually, when I watched "Training Day," *nag-iilusyon ako na maging contravida. Hindi ko lang alam kung ano yung* acceptability *sa* audience. *Pag nabigyan ako ng istoryang ganoon ka-lakas, tatanggapin ko. Kahit kontrabida!*"

Juan Gabriel wins four Billboard Latin Music Awards

By Adrian Sainz

MIAMI BEACH, Florida—Veteran Mexican artist Juan Gabriel took home four awards and Puerto Rico's Ricky Martin and El Gran Combo won special honors at the Billboard Latin Music Awards.

Top songwriter

Gabriel, who earned five nominations, rode the wave of his hit "Abrazame Muy Fuerte" (Hold me tightly) to win track of the year and airplay track of the year. He also was named the year's top songwriter, and his duet with Nydia Rojas entitled "No Vale la Pena" (It's not worth it) won track of the year for a vocal duo.

"I would like to thank everyone for their 30 years of support," Gabriel said at the awards show Thursday. He also performed a bolero with the upstart group Los Tri-O.

The awards at the Jackie Gleason Theater of the Performing Arts honored the most popular albums, songs and performers in Latin music as determined by sales and radio airplay data published on Billboard's weekly charts.

Martin, among the top Latin performers to cross over to the English-language pop arena, was presented with the special Spirit of Hope award for his charitable works.

Past winners of the award include Olga Tanon, Willy Chirino and Los Tigres Del Norte.

Regulars

El Gran Combo, regulars on the salsa scene for four decades, received the Lifetime Achievement Award. The 13-member group with one of the most renowned horn sections in Latin music released another album this year entitled "El Nuevo milenio—el mismo sabor" (New millennium—the same flavor).

Cristian won Latin track artist of the year, and Marc Anthony won the artist of the year award for top albums. Anthony's "Libre" (Free) earned him the prize for male tropical/salsa album of the year.

Celine Dion, singing in Spanish, and Anthony headlined the list of performers, which also included Colombian singer Carlos Vives, three-time nominees Jaci Velasquez and Cristian, and the pop/hip-hop/cumbia fusion group A.B. Quintanilla y Los Kumbia Kings.

GABRIEL. Won for his hit, "Abrazame Muy Fuerte."

Dion, who sang "Aun Existe Amor" (Love Still Exists), received a special award for her hit "My Heart Will Go On," which was the first English-language song to top Billboard's Hot Latin Tracks chart.

Colombian star Shakira, another crossover success, won the debut Viewer's Choice Award, while Tanon netted the female tropical/salsa album of the year award.

Four categories

Cristian defeated Gabriel, Banda El Recodo and Marco Antonio Solis for Latin track artist of the year. Solis, a member of Billboard's Latin Music Hall of Fame, was nominated in four categories but was shut out.

Mexican artist Lupillo Rivera, who led with six nominations, won the male and new artist awards for regional Mexican album of the year for work from "Despreciado" (Despised).

Rivera, who was born in Mexico but raised in Long Beach, California, is among the best-known artists of a regional Mexican style called norteno. He returned to Mexico to record "Despreciado."

The show was hosted by actor Miguel Varoni.

Telemundo, a Spanish-language television network, will air the ceremony Sunday. *AP*

Eric Rohmer hasn't lost his masterful touch

By Matt Wolf

LONDON—The French Revolution gets the personal touch in "The Lady and the Duke," an Eric Rohmer film revealing that the octogenarian French director of "Claire's Knee," "My Night at Maud's" and "Pauline at the Beach" hasn't lost his masterful touch.

Human behavior

For more than half a century, Rohmer has displayed singular gifts, putting human behavior under the microscope with the grace and finesse of a novelist like, say, Henry James.

It's somewhat surprising, then, to find his latest movie monitoring one of the cataclysmic moments in his country's history—the anti-royalist upheaval in the 1790s that saw the execution of Louis XVI and the reign of terror, however short-lived, of the ruthless Robespierre.

But far from fashioning his own sweeping "Les Miserables," Rohmer—with characteristic acuity—narrows the focus to Grace Elliott (Lucy Russell), the "lady" of the title and a Brit based in France who's confronted with various upheavals of her own.

"CLAIRE'S KNEE," one of Rohmer's films.

Having been a mistress to the future George IV in her native Britain, Grace crossed the Channel in 1786. By the time the film begins four years later, she has also been the lover of the Duke of Orleans (Jean-Claude Dreyfus), Louis XVI's cousin, and is still enjoying a warm and affectionate friendship with the Duke that events of the time look destined to blow apart.

Horror

Philippe, the Duke, has voted for the death of the king much to the horror of the aristocratic Grace, whose pro-monarchical stance proves unyielding. What's more, she loves France and won't be shunted back to London.

While fears for her safety lead those around Grace to urge her home to Britain, she bravely forsakes her country estate to help smuggle to freedom the fugitive Marquis de Champcenetz (Leonard Cobiant).

The point is, far from sitting by as an idle spectator to history, Grace is determined to do her bit to shape it, which only intensifies her dismay at the growing bloodshed that at one point finds the head of a friend paraded through the streets on a stake.

As a result, it's a matter of when, not if, relations with the Duke will reach an impasse on the way to an inevitably fatal conclusion, at least as far as one of the two title characters is concerned.

Grace, for her part, is caught intriguingly in limbo, especially as played by Russell with dark, darting eyes and a quicksilver wit.

Filmmaking technique

Speaking flawlessly accented French, English actress Russell deserves kudos—as does Rohmer's filmmaking technique. Rather than try any location filming in the French capital, the director moves his actors among an eye-opening array of deliberately artificial backdrops—scenes of Watteaulike beauty made possible by digital composition that allows the performers to move within the various tableaux.

Rohmer's approach rescues the characters from ever seeming like stock historical personages busily striking attitudes on overly dressed sets.

Instead, "The Lady and the Duke," for all its artifice, seems absolutely up-to-the-minute, as does the sensibility of a senior filmmaker who—based on this movie—is forever young.

"The Lady and the Duke," a Sony Picture Classics Release, runs 125 minutes. Three-and-a-half stars (out of four). *AP*

Cesar Montano . . .

From p. G1

of the picture, but only on his own good time.

And he has an admirable knack for finding new opportunities from unexpected sources. This must really get the goat of his foes, but it's worked in his favor again in recent weeks:

Significant role

Just as local acting offers were drying up, Cesar got noticed by an international film director, who offered him a significant role in a war picture starring Benjamin Bratt that will be shot in Australia starting next month.

(Incidentally, Bratt himself is another show biz survivor. Some years ago, his claim to fame was his being Julia Roberts' main squeeze. When they split up, some people thought Bratt's career was a goner—but he bounced back in a big way by daring to play the title role in the art-house sensation, "Pinero." And now, he's starring in a big war film produced by Miramax, no less. Bratt and Montano should find that they have a lot in common when they start filming next month.)

Noticed

We're glad that Cesar has been noticed by an international movie company. If he does well in his new Miramax project, other studios in the States and Europe could get interested in him, too.

Aside from his proven talent and commitment, Cesar's ace in this regard is the fact that, he may be Asian, but his looks are "adaptable" enough for him to play a number of different nationalities.

We trust that Cesar will take full advantage of this new and bigger opportunity in his stellar career. We advise him, though, to just concentrate on acting and resist the temptation to put in his two cents' worth in the areas of directing and producing.

Our expectation is that, when Cesar's Miramax project is released, it will remind even his foes in the local TV-movie industry that he's too good and big talent to pass up, despite his real or imagined "sins" against them.

Rita Avila and Allan Paule are soap-opera veterans

From p. G3

years ago.

Similarities

As veterans of soap operas, Rita (she's a semi-regular on another GMA 7 telenovela, "Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin") and Allan recognize the similarities of their past and present roles. "*Pare-pareho, kaya kailangan ma-*distinguish *mo sila sa isa't-isa,*" he avers. "I make it a point to change my attack on each role. I study the script and I also do more research on the character."

With her comely countenance, Rita is usually given characters who are good, like her role in "Kahit Kailan." "*Pero kailangang iba pa rin ang dating, kahit pare-parehong mabait,*" she insists, adding that it's easier for her to play a good person onscreen than a bad one. "*Kapag masama ang* character, kailangan negative *na kaagad ang* aura *ko,*" she quips.

Rita Avila and Allan Paule are soap-opera veterans

By Jocelyn Valle

WHEN she did a cameo in Ishmael Bernal's "Relasyon" 20 years ago (with Cesar Montano as her groom in the wedding scene attended by the main characters played by Vilma Santos and Christopher de Leon), Rita Avila never thought that she would become a fulltime actress.

"I was doing commercials then," she recalls, "but I was also studying, so *hindi pa buo ang loob ko na pumasok sa* show biz."

Contract stars

Her entry into the movie world was formalized four years after, when she became a contact star of Seiko Films. While still a commercial model, Rita relates, she attended an acting workshop facilitated by Laurice Guillen, Peque Gallaga and Abbo de la Cruz. Visibly impressed by the youngster's dramatic potential, the three directors recommended Rita to Robbie Tan.

Rita didn't let her mentors down as she successfully put into practice what she'd learned from them in her movie and TV projects, like her favorites "The Sisters," "Kiko-Kikay" and "Stella Magtanggol."

She was uncomfortable, though, with the star-building process. *"Tahimik lang kasi akong tao,"* she explains. "I just wanted to act."

She felt better when she moved to Viva Films eight years later, and worked in high-profile productions like "The Flor Contemplacion Story." *"Trabaho na lang kasi talaga ang ginagawa ko,"* she points out. *"At saka wala ng mga intriga."*

AVILA AND PAULE. Play Biboy Ramirez's parents in "Kahit Kailan."

Grateful

Rita makes it clear, though, that she and Robbie have remained on good terms. In fact, she's appearing in the forthcoming Seiko offering, "Bakat." "I'm very grateful to Robbie Tan," she smiles.

Allan Paule, on the other hand, feels indebted to the late, great director Lino Brocka, who gave him challenging roles and made sure that he delivered exceptional performances in "Macho Dancer" and "Gumapang Ka sa Lusak."

But while doing "Macho Dancer" in 1987, Allan had other things in mind. *"Sabi ko nga sa kanya,"* he recalls, *"isang* movie *lang ako, Direk."*

It took a long while before Allan accepted his "destiny," when he discovered theater and joined Tanghalang Pilipino in 1994. "Before *kasi, ang pag-arte sa akin, laro lang,"* he admits. *"Hindi ko naisip 'yung pagiging* artist. Then I realized *na*, as an artist, *may* responsibility *ako sa* audience. *Meron na talagang pagmamahal sa trabaho."*

Lessons

He now imparts the precious lessons he's learned from his 13 years in the acting business to newcomers. *"Lahat ng bagay napag-aaralan,"* he shares. *"Dati, mahiyain ako. Hindi ko akalain na makakaiyak ako sa harap ng* camera *pero kaya ko palang gawin 'yun. Natuto rin akong makisama sa iba't-ibang klaseng tao."*

Allan is thankful that he's able to work in both theater and mainstream entertainment (particularly TV). He's in "Anatomiya ng Korupsyon," which Tanghalan stages in different government offices, as well as in Channel 7's Sunday-afternoon soap opera, "Kahit Kailan," with, among other stars, Rita Avila.

Rita and Allan play the parents of newcomer Biboy Ramirez, whose relationship with another promising young star, Roxanne Barcelo, is the soap's main story.

"Kahit Kailan" is not Rita and Allan's first telenovela together. They were also in the cast of "Marinella" on Channel 2 a few

RITA/ p. G2

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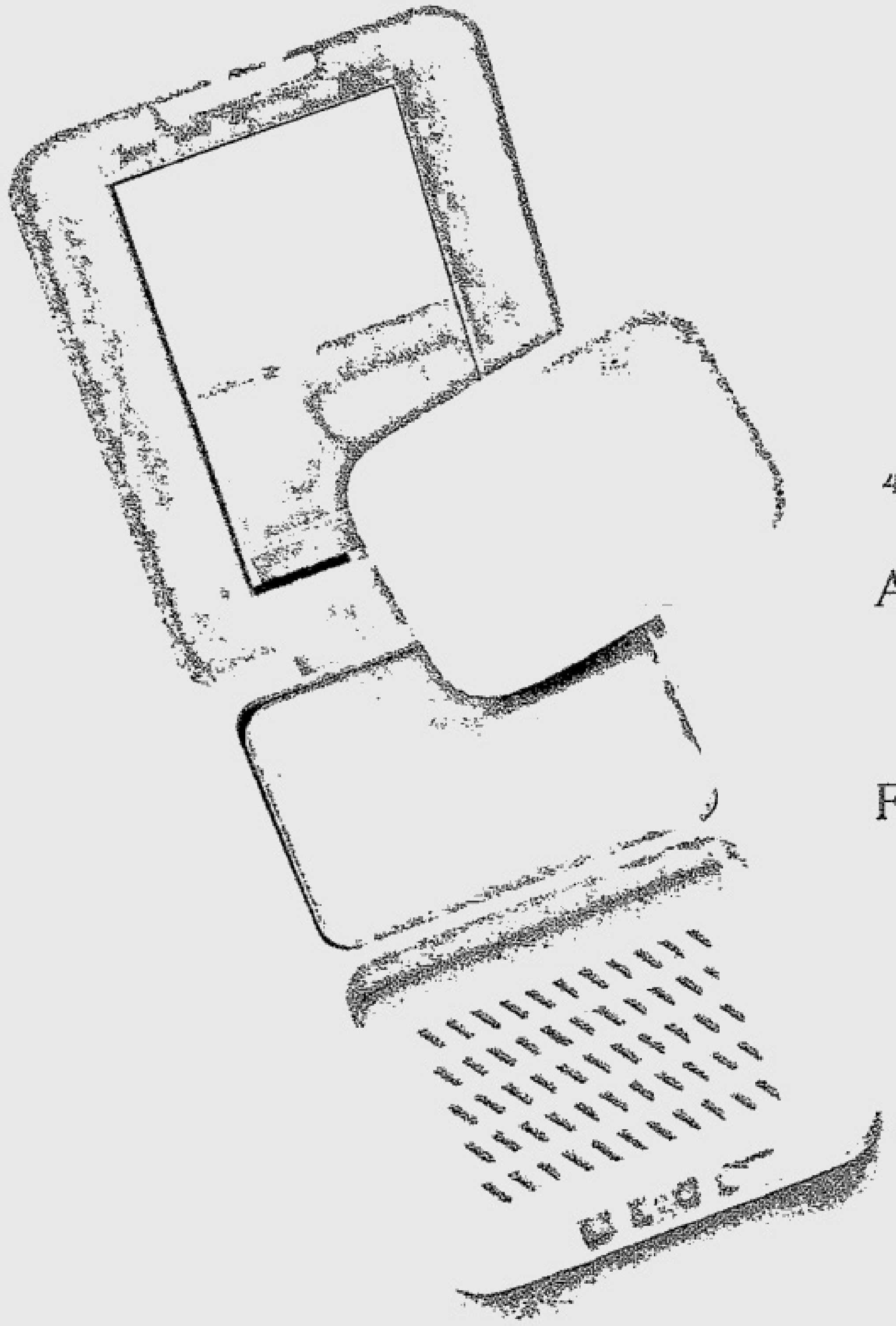

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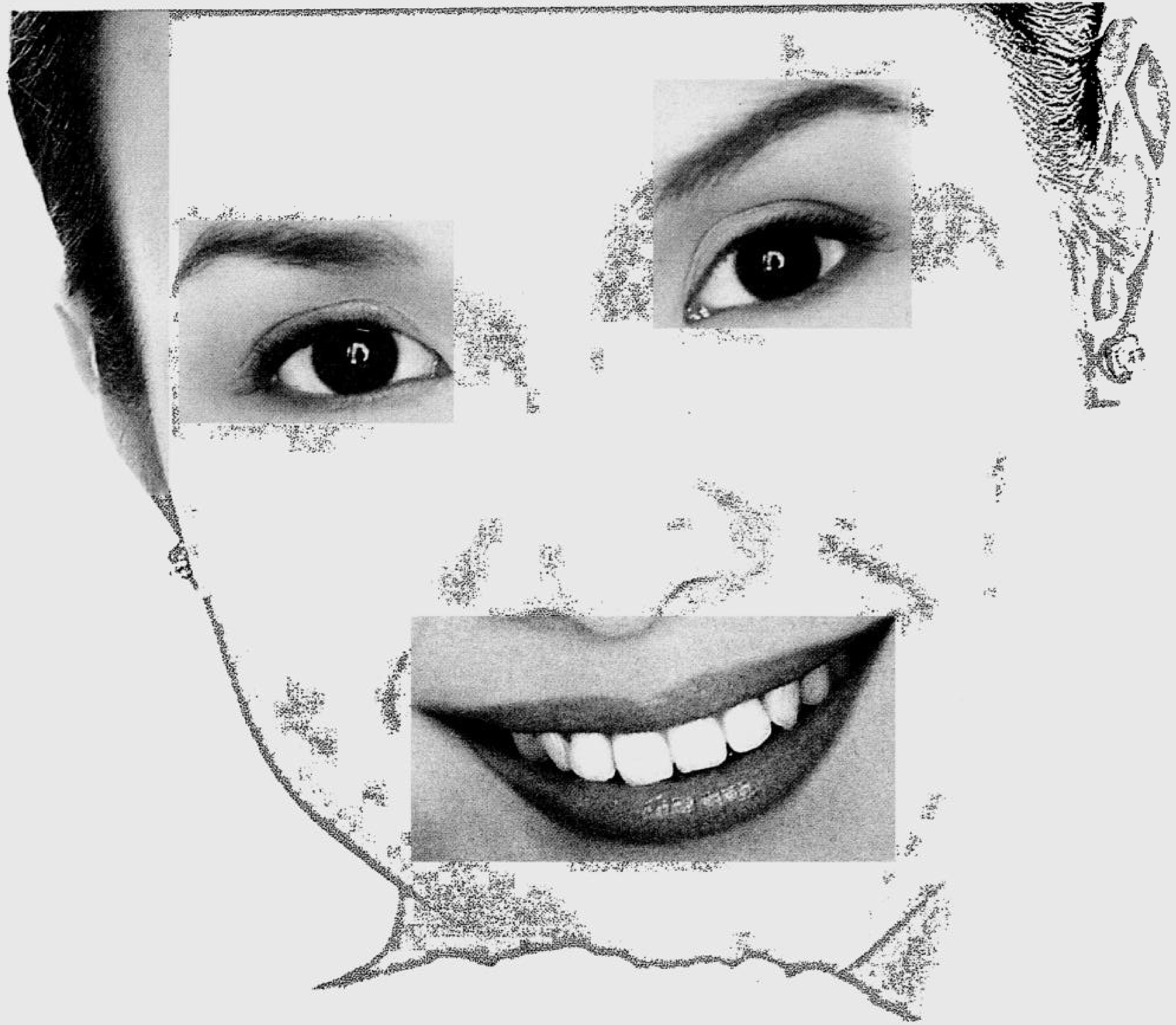
Fair lady?



AVON

[illegible] SPF [illegible]

Back to School

Aries Espinosa, Editor
sprojects@inquirer.com.ph
Apple Fontanilla, Account Manager

Get motivated: 8 tips to make you finish that homework

Find a way to turn your homework into something that interests you

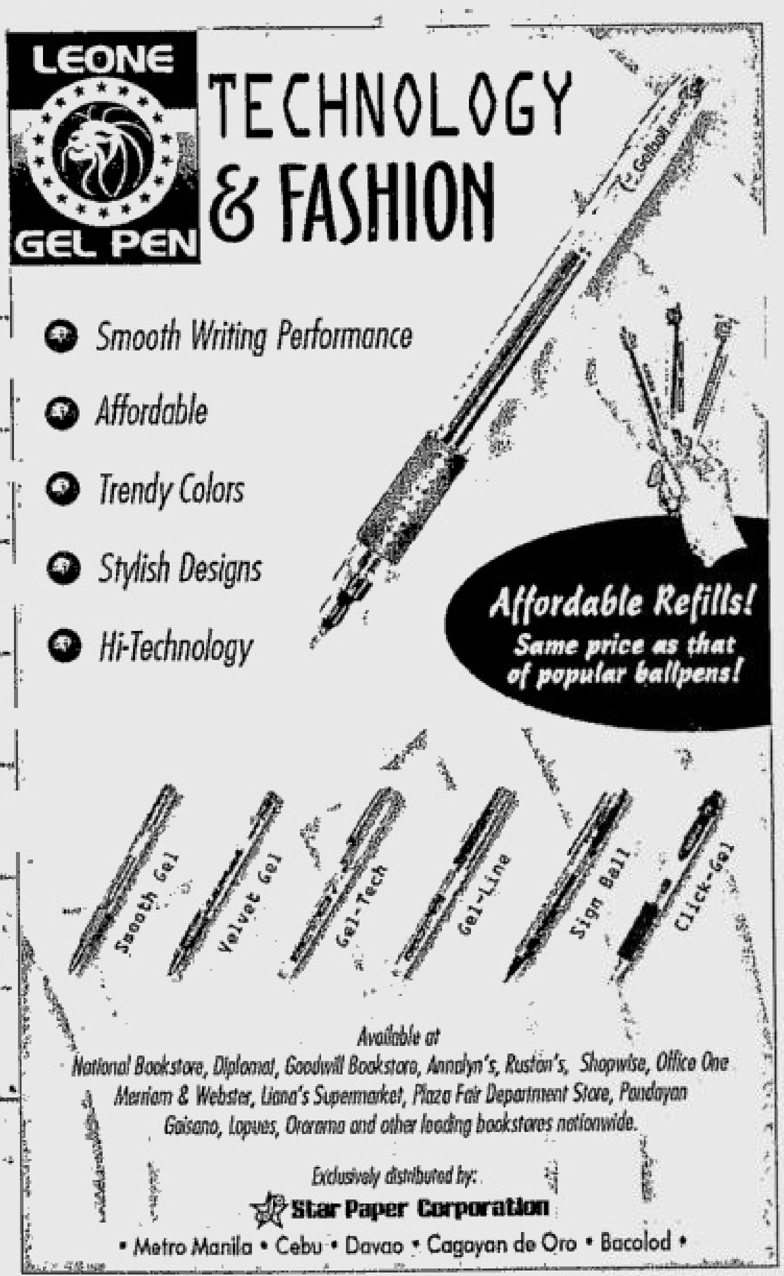
What do you do when you just can't get yourself to do home work? You know it has to be done, but it is the last thing you want to spend your time doing. How are you going to get yourself motivated? Here are eight tips to improve your motivation to study:

- Set goals for yourself. They don't have to be big ones, in fact, the smaller the better. Start by setting goals you know you can attain easily. For instance, a goal such as getting straight A's on your next report card would be nice, but it is a major goal. An easier one would be taking a page of notes for your report.
- Set a schedule for studying and write it down. Why write it down? Something about the written word makes it harder to ignore. Once you've written that you'll do it, it's harder to not do it.
- Arrange to get together with a friend to do homework. Meet a study buddy in a chat room to work through material you are both studying. They're counting on you as much as you're counting on them, so you can't let them down.
- Do the homework you dislike the most first. Also, if there is homework you find most difficult, do it first while your mind is still fresh. However, if you have a number of small assignments and one major assignment to work on, doing the small ones first will make it seem like you are making progress quicker.
- Ask for help from your parents. If you don't ask, they will assume you either don't need help or don't want help.
- Use rewards to mark your progress. You could "allow" yourself to go to a movie on Friday night if you get your History project completed by then, or you could take a snack break once you get the first thirty Algebra questions completed.
- Think positive. Moaning about how many upcoming exams you have or how hard it is learn to speak Spanish won't get your homework done. Likewise, focus on what you are doing well rather than on what is impeding your progress (the math teacher you don't like).
- Find a way to turn your homework assignments into something that interests you. If you have a **choice** of topics, choose something you've always wanted to learn about. If you have to do geometry homework, think about how you could use it when you want to become an interior designer. If you are researching Russia and your interest is in wildlife, find out what species you would find there.

Concentration

"I can't concentrate!" It's a familiar cry heard in households around the world whenever kids are doing their

MOTIVATED/ H2



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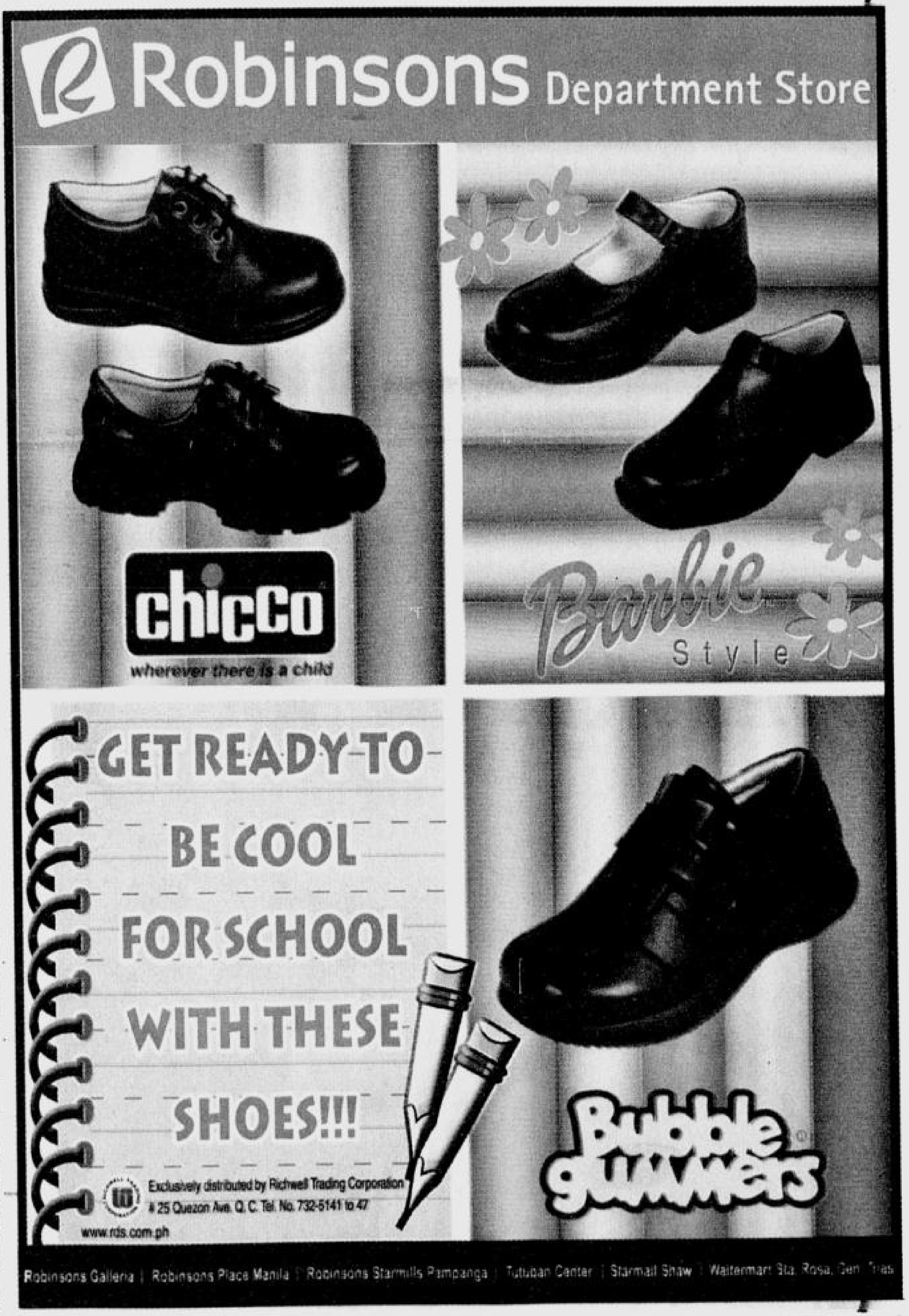

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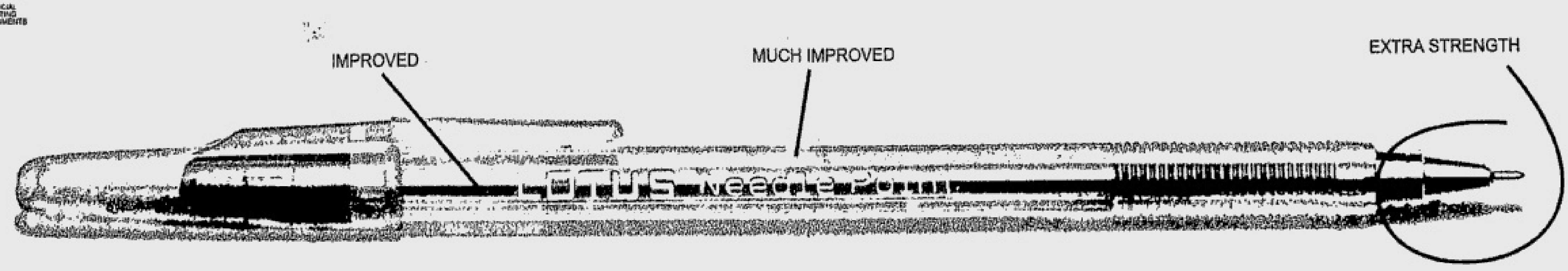

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Get motivated: 8 tips to make you finish that homework

From page H1

homework. Some days it is very difficult to concentrate. You may just not be in the mood to study. Or maybe it is a certain topic that you have difficulty concentrating on. Whatever the reason, there are some steps you can take to help you concentrate.

- Tackle your toughest project first. If you have homework to do in Biology and Algebra, which you love, and History, which you hate, do the History homework first. Your mind will be fresher and you'll get through it quicker.
- If you keep having the urge to get a snack, then get one together first, before you start studying. But that is the only snack you get until you're done. You'd be amazed at how much time you can waste going back and forth to the fridge.
- Remove any other distractions. Turn off the TV, go into another room if people are talking, tell your little brother to quit banging on your door. And don't take any phone calls until you are through.
- Try to do your homework early in the day. If you wait until just before bedtime, not only will you be rushed, but your brain will be tired out at the end of the day.
- Finally, don't bother procrastinating. Your homework won't get done by itself, so you may as well make up your mind to sit down and do it. Once you're done, you'll be free to get on with other things.

Get organized

Any time of year is a good time to make resolutions. If yours include getting better grades, you might want to start with getting organized. A few easy guidelines can help you to organize your schoolbooks, and you can use these tips to organize the rest of your life too!

- Start by reducing the clutter. The less you have to organize, the quicker a process it will be. This means going through your exercise books and throwing out (or recycling!) those notes your best friend left on your locker, those invitations to a birthday party last October, and the page of doodles you scribbled while you were talking on the phone. Be careful not to throw out any important notes that you may want to refer to later.
- Get a hole punch and put holes in all the important loose papers so they can be added to your binder. If they're important enough to keep, they're too important to risk losing.
- If all your subjects are in one binder, put those dividers to work and label each subject. Take a quick check through to see if any papers are filed with the wrong subject.
- If you keep each subject in a separate book, make sure each book is clearly labeled. If these books are duo tangs that you cannot add loose pages to, you may want to get a binder specifically for all those loose pages. In that case, make sure that binder is divided up by subject and labeled properly.
- If you don't already do so, start an agenda book. It is a quick and easy way to keep track of what homework needs to be done, and what the due dates of your assignments are.

Done all that? Great, now you can get on with organizing the rest of your life the same way. Reduce the clutter, separate everything by topic, label everything, and keep a record of your progress. And one more tip—do it today, the mess will be bigger by tomorrow! (***Source: www.about.com***)

> Any time of year is a good time to make resolutions. If yours include getting better grades, you might want to start with getting organized

Kumon lets children learn at their own paces

Wouldn't it be nice to see your child getting ahead of his or her classmates in math and reading? To aid your child in academic activities, you can either personally assist in doing homework, or enroll the kid in tutorial lessons.

One of the growing tutorials here in the Philippines is the Kumon method of learning. It basically teaches two of the most important subjects in schools—Math and Reading. Kumon is recently gaining popularity among students here in the Philippines. To date, there are over 2.6 million Kumon students worldwide.

The child is taught at his or her own pace. The teacher will ask the students to redo problems that were not answered correctly. Unless the child achieves the 100-percent mark in a particular lesson, the instructor will patiently teach him or her every session. Making them reach 100 percent also motivates them to do better. For a child, a 100-percent mark is something to cheer for and helps him build self-confidence.

Kumon is a home-based education system that aims to develop children's academic ability and acquire the attitude to study on their own. Study materials are designed to improve their reading comprehension at the shortest possible time. Only the most important amount and type of problems are selected. Through this the student's learning ability will be gauged for the next learning session.

Parents will have to attend an orientation by an instructor at any Kumon center. Your child will take an Initial Diagnostic Test, which will determine what level the child would begin. When the students go to the center, they get their files and submit their homework. At home the students will do little Kumon work. Having to do homework will develop a good daily routine, which makes studying a part of the day.

Kumon is actually a name of a father in Japan—Toru Kumon. He was a high school math teacher. To aid his son on his second grade arithmetic class, he designed math worksheets and assisted his son in solving these problems. It was in that 1958 Toru Kumon founded the Kumon Institute of Mathematics to help children in Math subject.

Kumon Philippines was opened in 1996. At present there are over 90 centers operating in the country. *Marlet D. Salazar*

For more information about Kumon, visit http://www.kumon.com.ph/

Tuition payment or wardrobe upgrade?

LIFE'S ESSENTIAL or little indulgences? Need or want? With today's economic situation, we really have to think twice before letting go of our hard-earned money. While it is evident that we must prioritize our basic needs, we also want to reward ourselves for working hard. When deciding between saving up for tuition payments versus the honest need to upgrade your wardrobe, the choices become unclear.

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AIG Credit Cards recognizes that while you have to prioritize necessities in life, you also need to enjoy it. This is why AIG Credit Cards has designed special programs that take care of your essential spending while giving you extras that allow you to live life to the fullest. Just like the Flexi-School Installment that lets you charge tuition payments, school uniform, school supplies, books and other school-related expenses to your AIG Credit Card. Choose from the convenient installment terms of 3, 6, 12 or 24 months and fixed interest rates of as low as 1.6 percent per month. There's also the members-only sale that offers exclusive savings of up to 80 percent off on apparel, books, personal accessories, shoes, toys, appliances, computers, home décor and more.

That's not all. Here are some of the other programs in store this season that give you the best of both worlds:

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Quick Bills. Paying for your utility bills has never been easier. With the Quick Bills facility, you can automatically charge your Globe, Smart/Piltel, Sky Cable, Meralco and PLDT bills.

Balance Transfer. Take advantage of interest rates as low as 1.6 percent per month when you transfer your other credit card balances to your AIG Credit Card. Be on your way to achieving financial relief.

Enchanted Kingdom. Treat your kids to a fun-filled experience by availing yourselves of a 30-percent discount on Enchanted Kingdom tickets.

With all these programs, here is the picture: you can either continue making difficult choices, or you can make life easier by applying for an AIG Credit Card. Without a doubt, it's better than cash.

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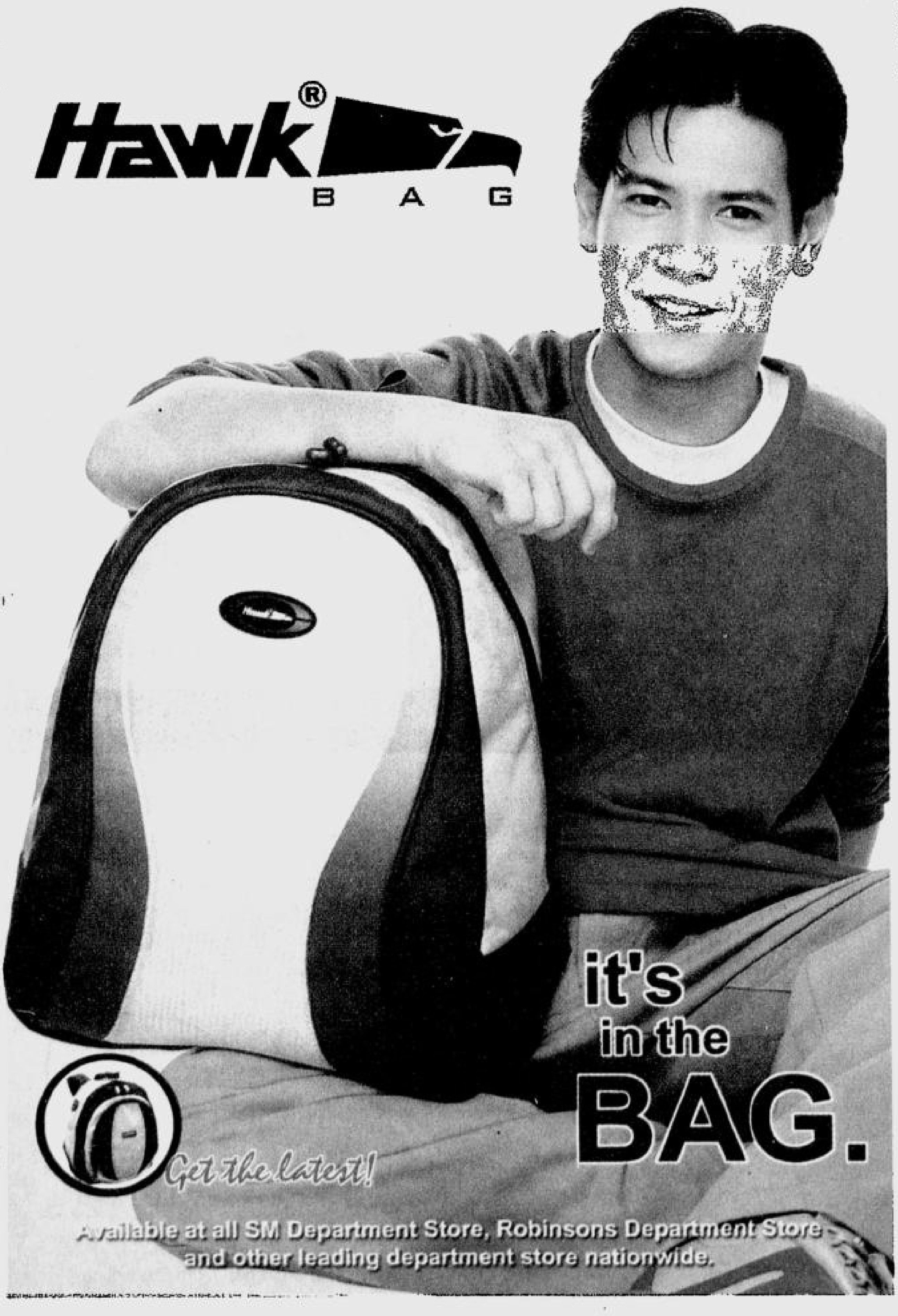

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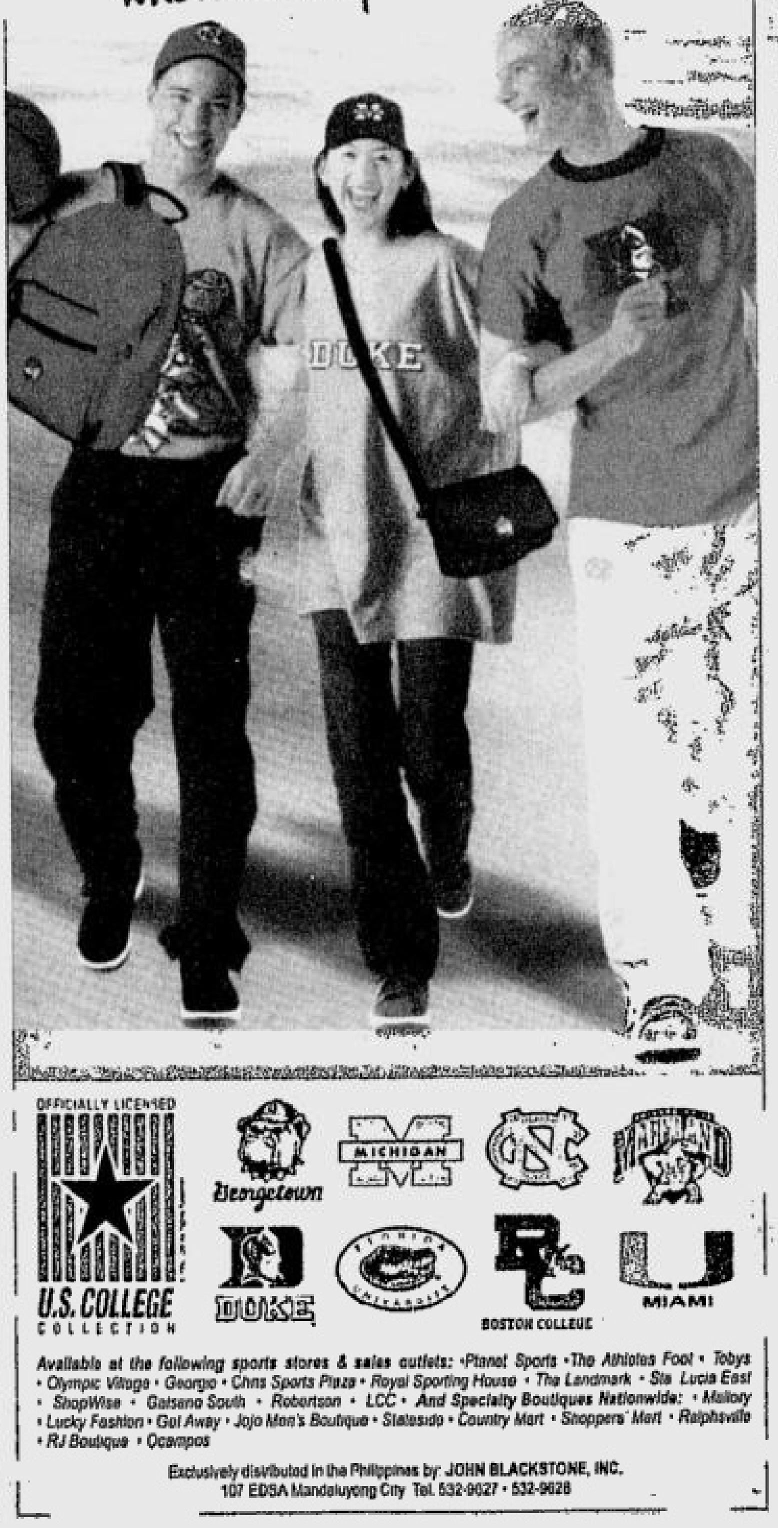

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DLSU-Manila granted highest accreditation status by Paascu

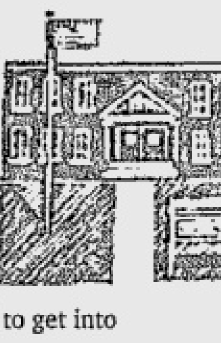
DE LA SALLE University-Manila (DLSU-M) was granted Level IV status by the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) upon the recommendation of the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Paascu) on April 29.

The first educational institution ever to receive the highest accreditation status in the Philippines, Level IV status was granted to La Salle for having distinguished itself in a broad area of academic disciplines and for its prestige and authority comparable to that of international universities.

Two of the major benefits that the University can now enjoy are full autonomy from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), allowing La Salle to offer new programs and courses in both graduate and undergraduate levels, and be awarded grants/subsidies from the Higher Education Development Fund.

As a leading private Philippine university, it was named as a Center of Excellence in 10 fields—Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electronics and Communications Engineering, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Literature, and Filipino and English Languages. It also has a record of outstanding overall performance of graduates at the licensure examinations under the Professional Regulation Commission.

Improve your study habits



DO YOU avoid studying like the plague? Do you find it hard to concentrate on your homework? Do you get to class and not remember anything of what you studied the night before? If so, here are some tips to help make your study time more worthwhile:

- Set aside a specific time to study. Many kids find it easiest to come home, have something to eat, then study right away, but if you have other activities at that time you'll need to find what works for you.
- Study every day. If you don't have assignments to do, take a few minutes to review topics that you find hardest. This may sound like a drag, but it's good to get into the habit of doing it every day.
- Create your own study space. If you don't have a desk in your room, or if the dining room table doesn't give you enough peace, consider going to the local library or taking up a corner of the basement.
- Don't do other things while you are studying. This includes watching TV, fixing a snack, and talking on the phone. Some people claim they can study better with music playing. That's a matter of personal preference. If it's just quiet background music that doesn't make you want to play the drums on your books, it's probably not too distracting.
- If you have a lot of reading to do to prepare for a test, try taking notes as you go along. Otherwise, you'll find your mind wandering.
- Homework shouldn't take up all of your spare time. If you find one teacher is giving out hours of homework all the time, it could be that he/she doesn't realize it takes so long. Talk to your teacher, or to another teacher you can approach and alert them to the amount of time your homework is taking up.
- Finally, ask for help if you need it. Teachers and friends are usually willing to go over something with you again if you didn't quite "get it" the first time. Or ask your question in the forum, where you can join up with others who might understand that particular topic better.

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US College goes back to school

FEATURING 10 big US conference schools, the US College Collection means going back to school in style. Wear any of your favorites—the Wolverines (Michigan University), the Bulldogs of Georgetown U, the Tar Heels (North Carolina), the Blue Devils of Duke University, and the Eagles of Boston College. Today the Collection also features logos of the Universities of Georgia, Maryland, Miami, and the Florida State University.

Walk in through those school gates like a champion, ready to face new challenges, your mind and heart set on giving the most to life and getting the most out of life.

Go the way of champions. Get quality training, eat the proper diet, wear the right clothes. Be seen with the best, and walk like you're on top of the world.

,Considered the wear of champions, US College Collection features universities known for their excellent sports programs and training facilities. It is here where champions are made. Some of their outstanding alumni now walk the hall of fame in sports. North Carolina has produced such world-renowned NBA stars as Michael Jordan as well as Vince Carter. From Georgetown University, we have Allen Iverson, Patrick Ewing, and Alonso Mourning. And of course, Magic Johnson and Chris Weber, who come from Michigan University. Then there's Grant Hill from Duke University. Michigan U is also one of the Big Ten Conference schools in the United States, constantly called upon to host intercollegiate championships.

From head to toe, wear your favorite logo in comfort and style, from caps to sunvisors, shirts and jeans (or shorts), to socks and shoes or sandals. Accessories now also include bodybags, backpacks, tote bags, and wallets. All materials are US-made, with new designs to suit varying taste and wearing styles.

Shirts and tops are light and soft jerseys, made from 100-percent preshrunk cotton, bring an easy fit that speaks of comfort and style. Using the latest technology in shirt printing such as high-density gel printing, glitter with embossed printing, and FlockPrint, the shirts feature US College logos in the front panel.

Closed caps are of peach twill and washed twill, fitted with a sandwiched precurved visor with contrasting 8-topstitch design, and 6 sewn contrasting eyelets. Catch the colors of the sun in your attire.

Peach twill caps are made of six panels of constructed brushed cotton twill with buckram backing, with a personalized US College garter as sweat band, so that one size fits all, and are available in bright colors like yellow, red, orange, royal blue, light blue. Washed twill caps are made of high-quality heavy twill, with six panels of constructed enzyme garment washed with buckram backing.

Backpacks and bags are of polyester 600D or PVC backing, otherwise known as Polytouch. The bags and backpacks feature a one-zipper front pocket with a personalized US College logo on the pocket and the zipper puller. Lightweight in design, they are fitted with a padded shoulder strap of nylex material, the better to tote those books and personal things around campus. They are available in assorted colors.

The US College Collection is now available at leading sports and footwear outlets in Metro Manila and in specialty boutiques nationwide. In Metro Manila, find them at Planet Sports, The Athlete's Foot, Toby's Sporting Goods, Olympic Village, Chris Sports, The Landmark Department Store, ShopWise, and at the Sta. Lucia East Shopping Mall.

Designed to keep up with the demands of an active lifestyle, the US College Collection is a growing product line. Patterned after the guiding principle of Duke University, the Collection is dynamic in its commitment to excellence, constant in its high-quality standards, yet ever "changing to meet changing conditions."

The collection is exclusively distributed in the Philippines by John Blackstone Inc. For details on distributorship, call Leo A. Malasig or Mitch G. Lim, sales and marketing department of John Blackstone Inc. Its office is located at 107 Edsa, Mandaluyong City at 532-9627 or 28.

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E-Star Pass promo extended

EXPRESSIONS is happy to announce that the E-Star Pass Promo has been extended to Oct. 31. The E-Star Pass card will be accepted at all Expressions stores (except those located in Mart One stores), as a special treat for all Expressions customers in time for their back-to-school season purchases.

The E-Star Pass Card gives Expressions customers 10 percent off on their first purchase with no minimum purchase requirement. Another 10-percent discount awaits the E-Star Pass holder at the 8th purchase visit as well as a fresh E-Star Pass Card to be used on their next purchase before the end of the promo.

E-Star Pass Cards are distributed in areas surrounding all Expressions stores.

USPS-Skynet, Expressions tie up

EXPRESSIONS Stationery Shop Inc. recently signed an agreement with Skynet International Express to offer USPS-Skynet International Express courier services of mail, documents or parcel in Expressions' retail stores. This new partnership will mean an addition to Expressions' services line which currently includes photocopying and desktop printing that perfectly complement its affordable school and office supplies. The USPS-Skynet International Express' courier services include international services or USA-bound mail, documents and parcel and Domestic mail, documents and parcel delivery services.

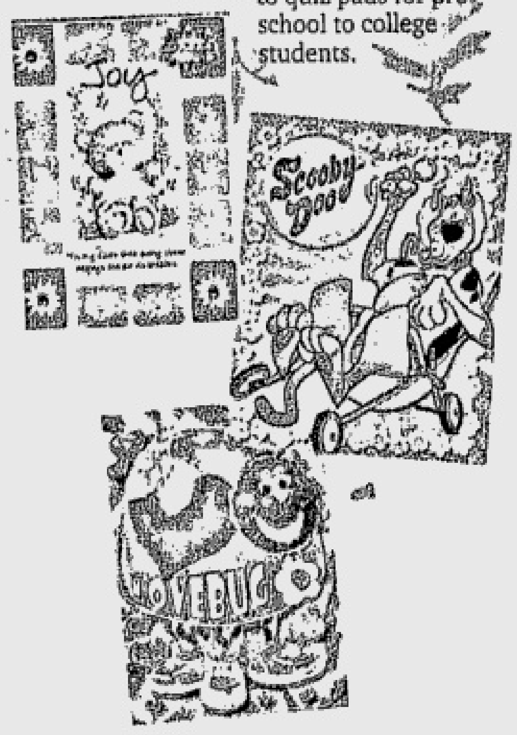
The USPS-Skynet courier services were initially launched in 10 Expressions-owned stores located in Baliuag, Meycauayan, Tandang Sora, Malinta, Novaliches, Ever Commonwealth, Mart One Olongapo, Mart One Lipa, Mart One San Fernando, La Union, and in ExCel Pedro Gil. Both companies plan to launch the courier service in the remaining 32 stores of Expressions by end of 2002.

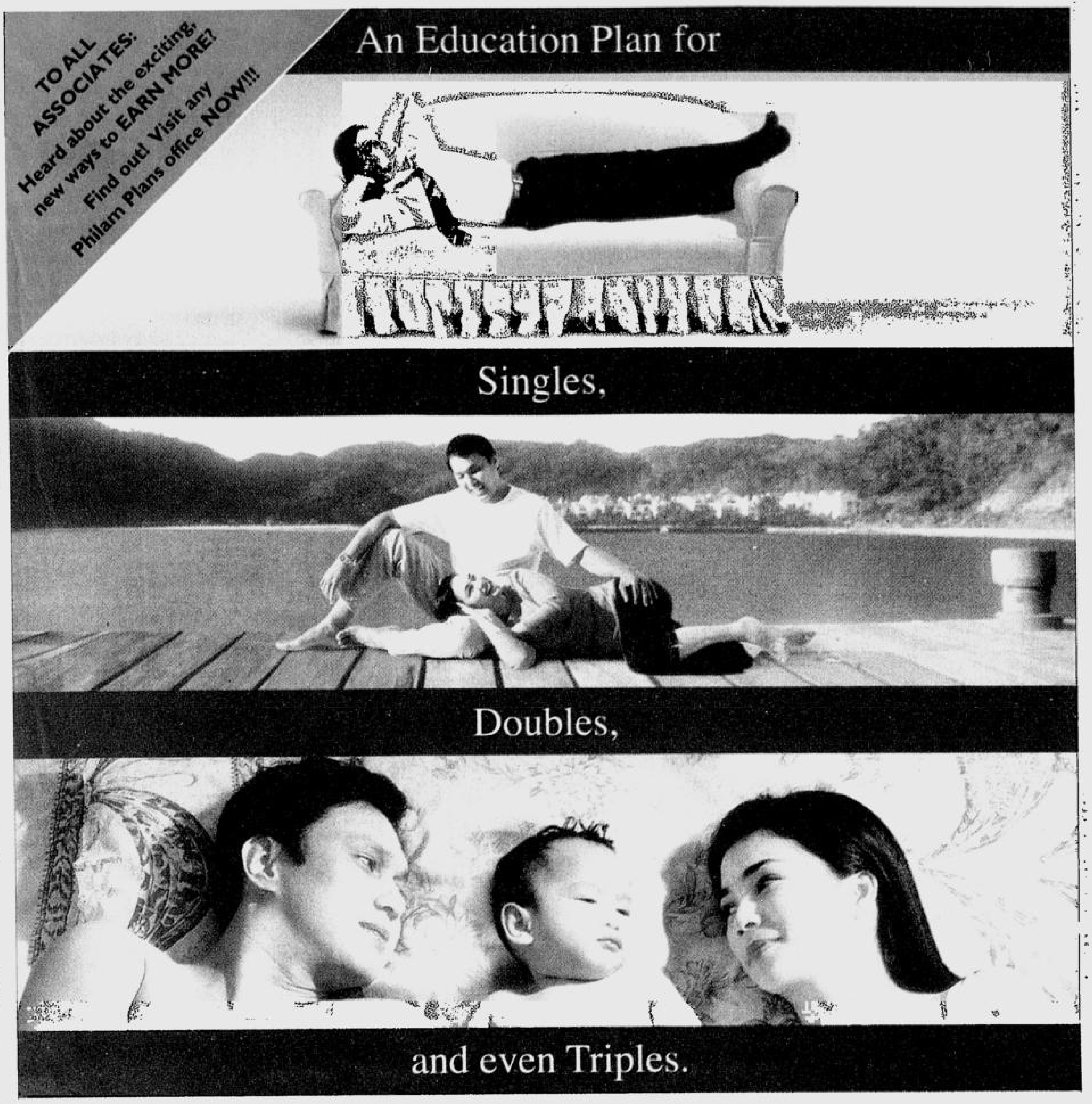
Get ahead, get Advance

THE HEAT is still on! The back-to-school shopping rush in now here, too. With only a few weeks to go before classes start, everybody is now cramming for the best school supplies.

With a myriad brands to choose from, you can get a head start with a reliable brand of notebook—Advance. Advance Notebooks boasts of over a hundred of the coolest designs that make learning fun with high-grade quality paper for smooth and easy writing. On top of these, Advance Notebooks are affordable to every cool gal and guy in school.

Cartoon Network favorites like Scooby Doo and Dexter's Laboratory are featured in Advance Notebook collections for kids and teeners. For composition and writing notebooks, Kidz is also one popular design for graders. Various spiral notebook designs include Teen Notes, Neon Calypso, Sweet Pastel, Fancy Notes, Falcon Florals and the top-of-the-line Movie Stars, which features the hottest teen stars in the television and movie industries. Advance has a complete line of notebooks from stitched-bound to spiral, ruled pads from writing, intermediate to quiz pads for pre-school to college students.

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CEU Info-Science center to open

RESPONDING to the need for information and communication technologies (ICT) in harnessing professionals towards national development, Centro Escolar University president Rosita L. Navarro announced the formal opening of CEU's latest facilities investment, the 7-story Information Science Center (CEU-IS Center) which will be formally inaugurated on June 3.

The state-of-the-art building at San Rafael Street houses CEU's technologically advanced computer laboratories, furnished with multimedia equipment that have an e-learning-based system and high-speed access to the Internet. It has inter-building fiber-optic network and imported flexible raised classroom flooring. Each classroom is equipped with all-IBM computers with the latest software.

The CEU Information Science Center is also environment-friendly, as it uses a modern sewerage treatment system that facilitates water conservation through recycling.

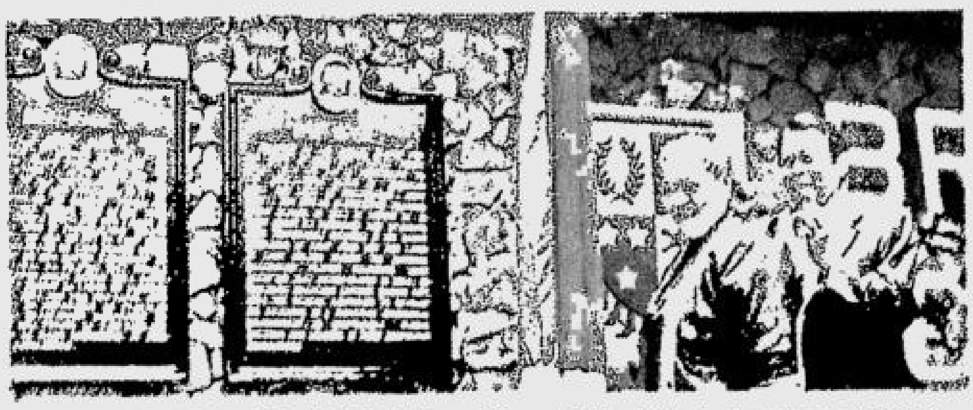
Designed to reinforce the concept of quality education through computer-based learning for all courses , the IS Center will have 12 laboratories to service CEU students' needs. Aside from the cutting-edge computer units, the center also houses a travel bureau and café bar to simulate a professional environment for the Tourism students of the University.

Brent honors founder

THE FAMOUS and beautiful Brent School in Baguio City commemorated its founder, Charles Henry Brent, on March 15. He founded the school in 1909 for the sons of American missionaries, businessmen and from the army who were based in Baguio during that time. Apart from a great history and heritage, you will find historical buildings in the campus, one of which is the oldest in Baguio.

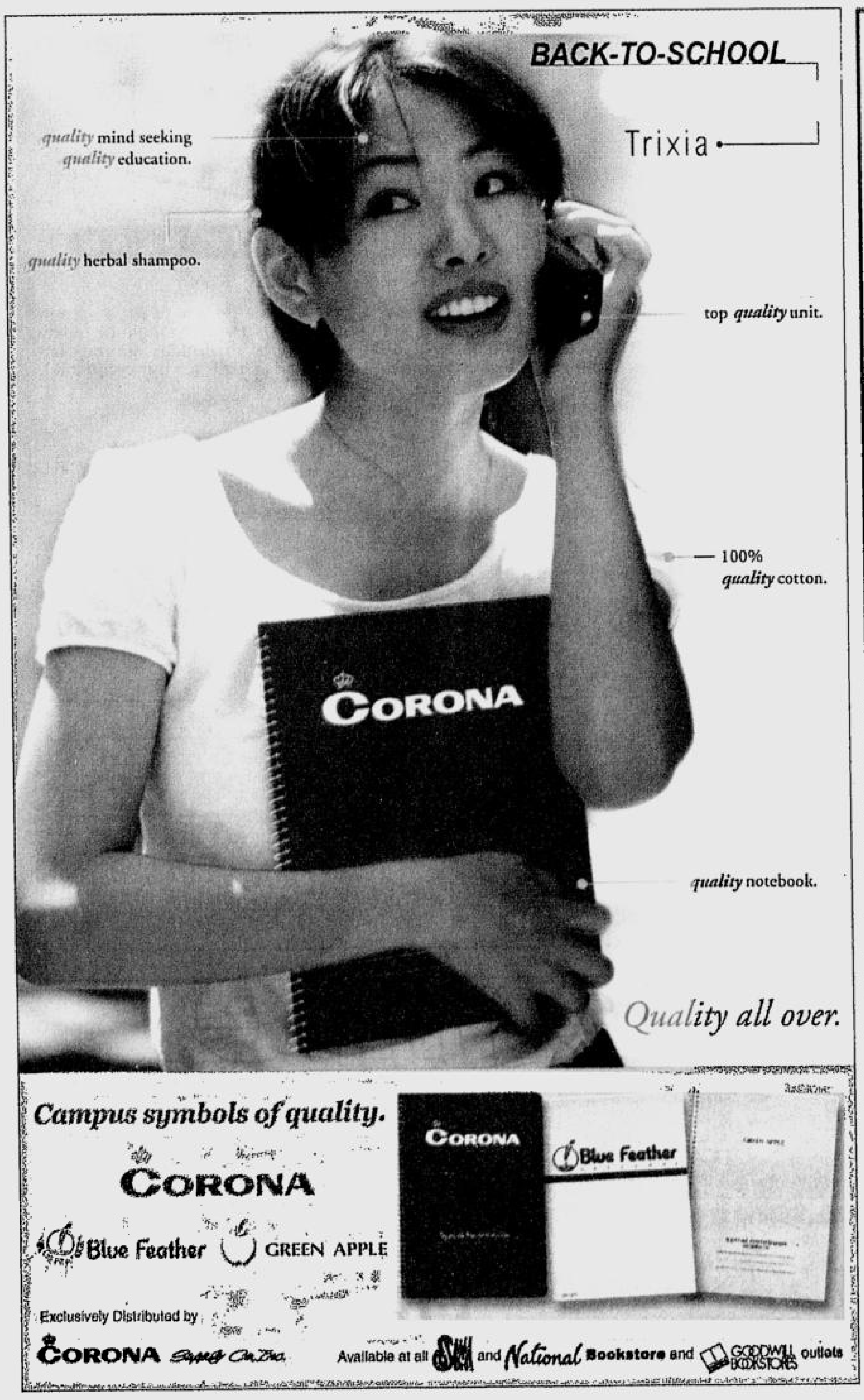
The National Historical Institute of the Philippines has recognized Brent School Baguio as one of the historical sites in the country. The historical commemoration rite took place during the "Brent Day" celebration. Dr. Pablito Trillana III, chair of the National Historical Institute, together with Ursula Daoey, Class '66, unveiled the historical marker. Witnesses to the transfer of the marker from the NHI to Brent School Baguio were the Rev. Gabriel Dimanche (former Headmaster of all three Brent Schools), J. Marsh Thomson (former board chair), Ma. Regina Nevada (president of the Student Council), Vanessa Jennifer Go (president of the National Honor Society).

Today, Brent, the oldest international boarding school in the Philippines, offers the prestigious International Baccalaureate and many graduates attend colleges and universities in the United States and around the world.



URSULA DAOEY and Dr. Pablo Trillana III unveil the historical marker at Brent School Baguio.

SUMMER may be through, but at Richwell Trading Corp., the fun isn't. Make your kids' journey back to school doubly exciting with its exclusive products meant to make children stand out. Choose the shoes that would surely make your kids' classmates follow. There's the Chicco Selena, the Chicco Reeve, Bubblegummers, the Barbie Jenny, and the Barbie Lady Love. Don't forget to make them wear Barbie socks to keep the feet comfy and fresh. Then, let your children show how fun learning can be with the Barbie Pencil Case, the Barbie All-Purpose Case, the spiral notebook and the saddle stitched notebook. To keep it all together in a neat bundle, choose from a variety of Denim Trolley or backpacks. For sure, your kids can't help but say 'School's just like play. It's fun to learn all day!' Richwell Trading Corp. is located at 25 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.



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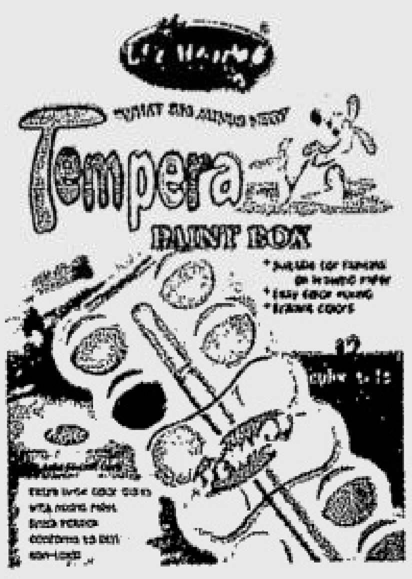
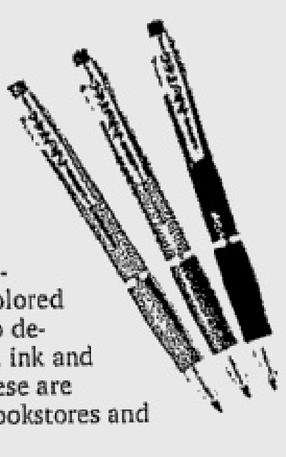
Li'l hands tempera paint



LI'L Hands Tempera paint set has vibrant and brilliant colors and is very suitable for painting on drawing papers. Tempera paints are earth or mineral pigments mixed with egg yolk and egg white. It dries quickly. Tempera paints are characterized as opaque, or non-transparent. Li'l Hands Tempera paint is child-friendly because of its easy color mixing properties. It is non-toxic, safe for children to use. It conforms to both European (EN71) and American (ASTM D4236) safety standards, which ensure completely safe use of an art product. Li'l Hands Tempera paint will soon be made available on the shelves of your favorite retail stores nationwide. Be sure to grab one for your workshops, and include this one in your back-to-school list.

Lotus Nutec Retractable ballpen



AMALGAMATED Specialties Corp. (Amspec), makers of Lotus ballpens, presents the newest retractable ballpen in the market, the Lotus Nutec ballpen. Designed for the cool and hip market, the Nutec offers superior writing performance at a cost-effective price. Features include cool translucent-colored barrels, superior retracting mechanism, rubber grip designed for improved writing comfort, and imported ink and tungsten tip for a smooth writing performance. These are available in black, blue and red colors in leading bookstores and department stores nationwide

Reinventing the regular ballpen

AMSPEC recently came up with the new improved version of the best-selling Lotus ballpens. After exhaustive research on consumer demands and latest trends in the writing instruments industry, improvements were implemented on the Lotus Regular fine point ballpens. These include a Tungsten Carbide tip from Switzerland, Documental Ink from Germany, redistribution of the ballpen barrel weight for a better writing feel, and tinting of the barrel to match the ballpen's ink color. The ballpensare available in boxes of 50s in black, blue, red, violet and green ink colors at leading department stores and bookstores nationwide.

The new Lotus Techpen

AMSPEC recently came up with the all-new Lotus Techpen. Responding to the growing market need for writing instruments specially designed for fine and precise writing, Lotus developed the Techpen to fill this need. Features include a 0.5-mm extra fine point tip, innovative airflow design for smooth and precise ink flow, see-through barrel for real-time ink visibility, and superior ink intensity for clearer and better-defined writing. The Techpen is being positioned as a high-quality yet cost-effective writing instrument for use by students and professionals. The Techpen comes in black, red and blue colors, and are available in singles and dozen boxes nationwide.

AMA to subsidize tuition of 10,000 students

THE AMA Foundation Inc. is offering subsidized tuition to benefit 10,000 students this school year.

The Flexible Tuition Subsidy (FTS) program opens its application to freshmen and new student transferees of AMA Computer University (Amacu) and AMA Computer College (AMACC) campuses nationwide until May 27.

The FTS program is a student assistance arrangement whereby qualified students will only pay 40 percent of the total enrollment cost and enjoy varying levels of subsidies up to 60 percent to cover tuition and other school fees depending on their financial needs and their capacity to pay.

The combined family income of the applying student must not exceed P150,000 per annum and a certification or proof of this must be presented.

Amable C. Aguiluz IX, president of AMA Foundation Inc., said "this joint project of the AMA Foundation aims to provide financial assistance to academically qualified Filipino students for them to acquire world-class education at AMA. We want to give quality educational opportunity for the Filipino youth today.

"We hope to see more students earning internationally recognized certificates and diplomas from AMA campuses through the implementation of tuition-subsidized programs like these," he added.

Along with AMA Foundation council of advisers Dr. Angel Alcala, Dr. Onofre Corpuz, Hon. Victor Macalincag, and Hon. Leticia Ramos-Shahani, Aguiluz stressed that the initial 10,000 beneficiaries of the program will help alleviate the plight of parents in the schooling expenses of their children.

An interested student must pass the qualifying entrance exam, socioeconomic status investigation, and other strict selection standards of the program.

Interested students must submit all required forms and documents: fully accomplished application for financial aid; initial subsidy processing fee (P500); identification photographs of parents/legal guardians of applicant; Identification programs of applicant; Original copy of parents' Certificate of Employment; Photocopy of Income Tax Return; Barangay Certification; High School report card for freshmen; Transcript of records for transferees.

Students are encouraged to send their FTS applications not later than the deadline set. For details, call 373-9920/371-3136, or visit any Amacu or AMACC campus near you.

John Prats, Hawk bag craze

CLEARLY, there is a John Prats craze going on.

John is a mainstay of two popular ABS-CBN shows "Whattamen" and "G-mik." He's part of a potential hit Star Cinema movie "Jologs." His face, that ultra-cute, totally mesmerizing face of his, is a major sight at every main thoroughfare. Don't tell, but don't you almost want to smile back each time he greets you in one of those gigantic Hawk billboards?

Hawk manufacturers simply believe John's smile alone can bring the predominantly teen market to go to the nearest Hawk outlet and check out the reasons John looks so cool and satisfied in those billboards. Hawk people say, "It's in that smile."

John, for his part, is happy. Says he, "Ito kasi yung klase ng product na kapag in-endorse mo, proud ka. Hindi nakakahiyang i-model. Yung gagamitin mo talaga kahit off-cam at ibibilang mo sa sarili mong gamit talaga. Like ako, sa tapings or out-of-town shoots or shows, Hawk luggage ang lalagyan ng gamit ko. Pag may ibang lakad, Hawk backpack naman. Maski nga mga co-stars ko, nakiki-Hawk bag na rin e."

What John means, but avoids saying, is that modeling for Hawk isn't just a money trip.

And John is right. Hawk products are something one can be proud of owning. Each Hawk bag or luggage—made from imported nylon—is a certified quality product. The design, style, and color are well researched, taking into consideration the durability, function, fashion, and versatility.

More importantly, the manufacturers also consider affordability, which means all Haw products are priced competitively—and even comes with warranties—without sacrificing quality.

"It's in the bag," says John, smiling. We just have to take John's word for it. After all, he who's in the peak of his career these days won't approve of much less nor accept an endorsement deal that could stain his good image.

Hawk, for its part, won't risk the same either. After all, it has been a market leader for 25 years. Those numbers translate to 25 years of consumer satisfaction, no less.

Hawk and John are a perfect match. Both possess positive qualities. Call it mutual admiration or even mutual benefit. But when two well-known entities combine forces, there's bound to be something really worth believing.

You better believe when John says "It's in the bag."

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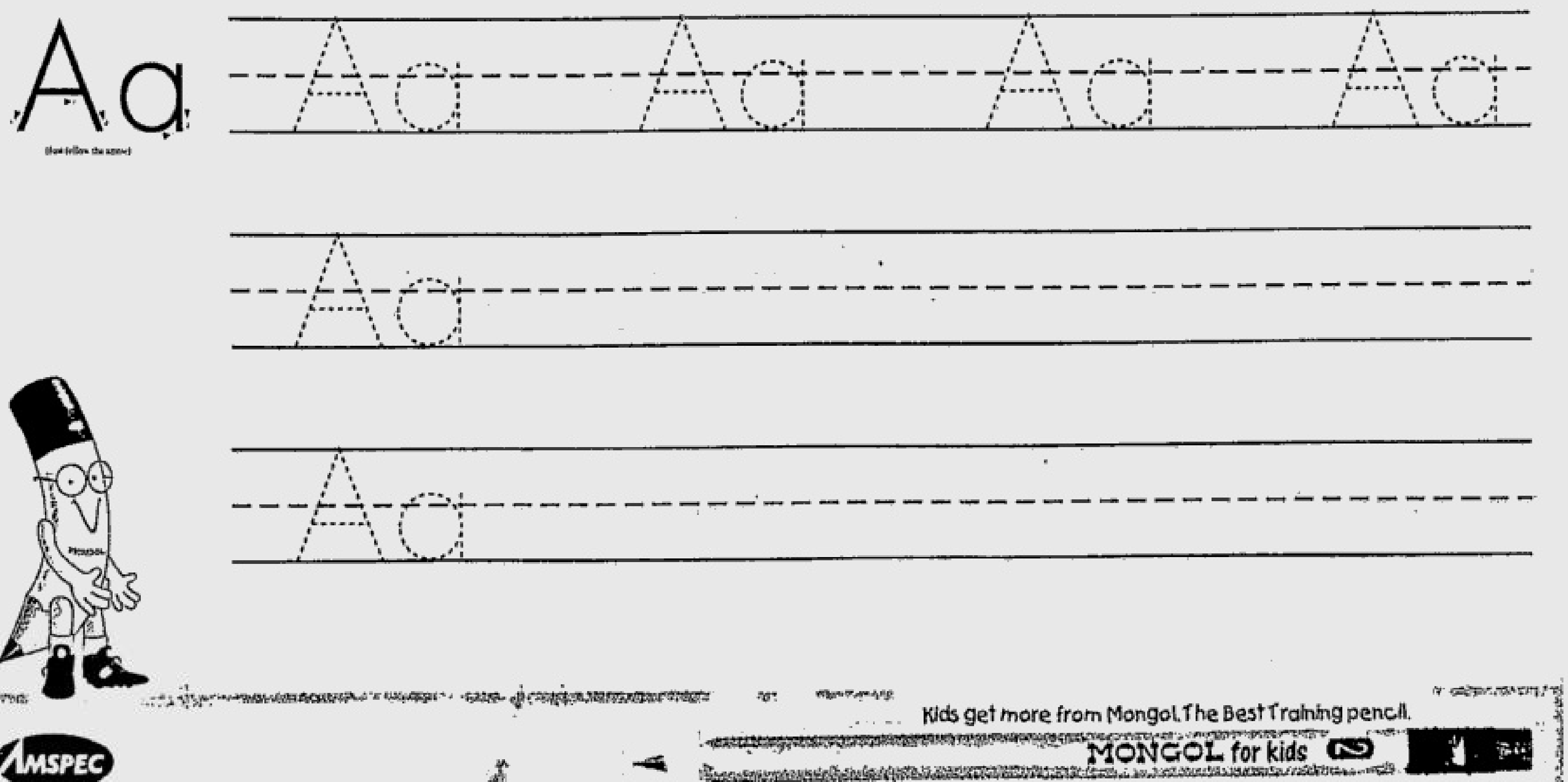

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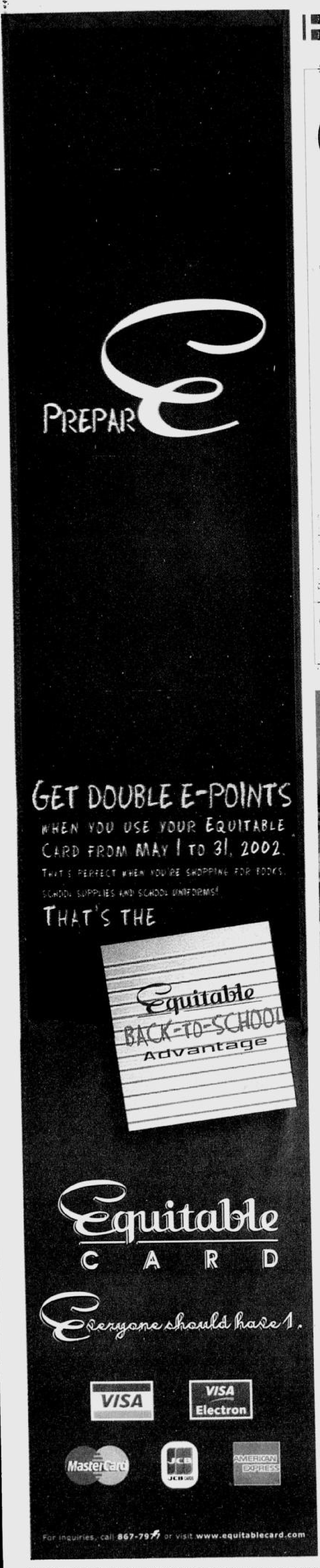
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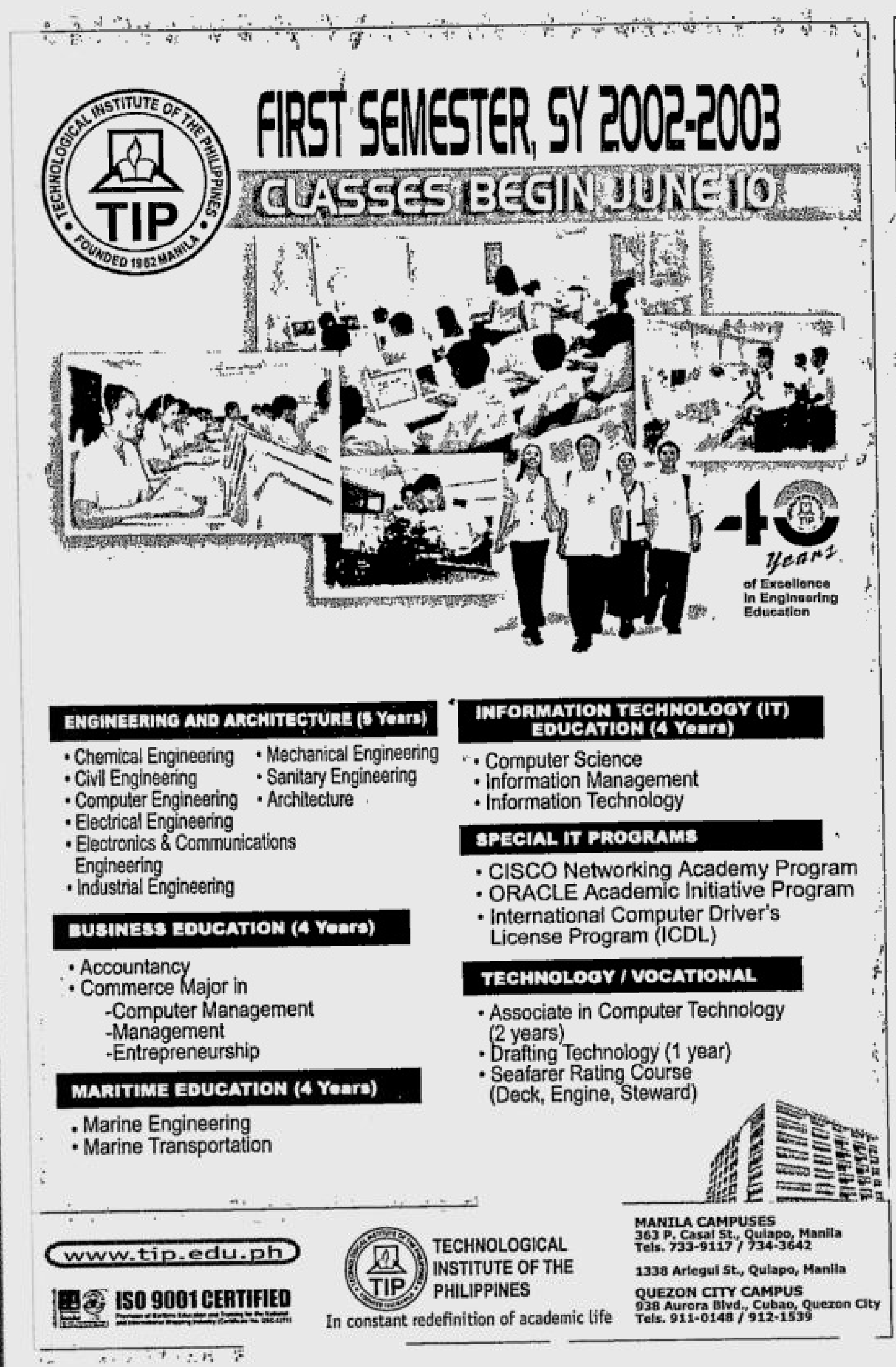
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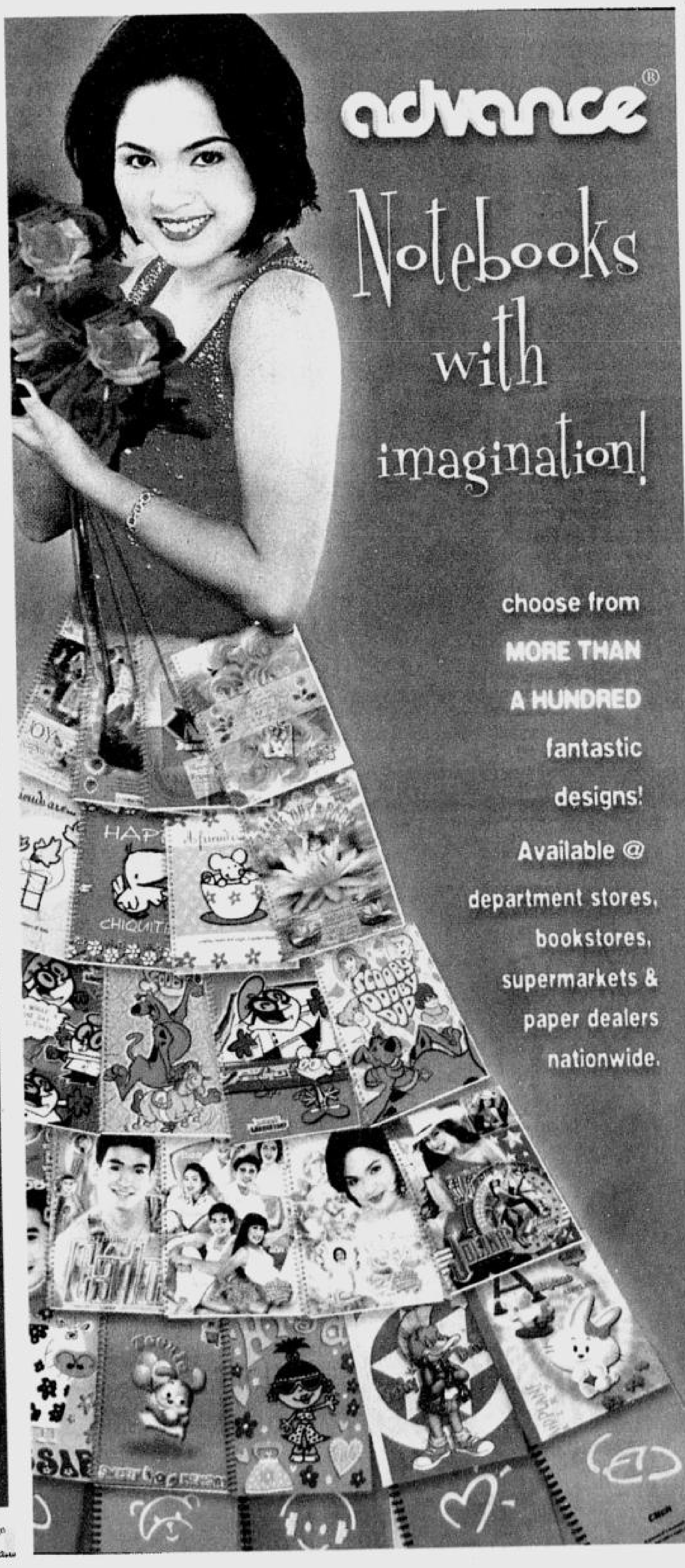
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Managing your study time

LET'S take a look back in time. Picture yourself last year, studying for final exams, writing final reports and research papers, still managing to get together with your friends and go to the yearend dance. Everything went smoothly, right?

No, you say. Definitely not! Studying consisted of staying up all night trying to cram for five different exams, final reports were scribbled out on the bus ride to school, and while you did make it to the dance, you and your friends spent the whole time there talking about what you would do if you failed. What a drag that was!

If you don't want to repeat that scenario again, read on. Using these tips to organize your time, you'll feel more prepared for your exams, your final reports will be well researched and neatly prepared, and you can actually enjoy that yearend dance this year.

- Using your agenda book or notes from your classes, make a list of all assignments due and all exams you'll be writing.
- Put this list in chronological order, with the assignments and exams that come first at the top.
- If you know what portion of your overall mark each assignment or exam is worth, write it down as well. There's no sense studying for hours for an exam that is only worth 10 percent of your grade and not having enough time left over to write a report worth 40 percent of your grade.
- Now you need to add the rest of your life to your list. Write down when that yearend dance is, and any other events you will attend or commitments you've made. You may be active in sports or play in a band, or maybe your best friend's birthday is next week and you want to treat her to a movie. Maybe you have a part-time job. The point is, you need to make sure you still have time to live a little.
- Now that you have all that written down, it's time for some serious scheduling. You need to work out how much time you need to study for each exam, and how much time you need to spend researching and writing each report. Remember that you won't want to do it all in one night. You may decide that you need to spend a total of three hours on your report on Chicken Farming, but one hour a night for three nights is much easier to handle than doing it all at once. Be realistic. You won't want to study for five hours every night until school's out, but you also can't write a 2000-word essay in half an hour.
- Get out a calendar and write down what you expect to do each day (or evening). Try to include enough *goof off* time.
- Now, get down to work! But if you've planned to study Greek Gods for an hour and then go on to Square Roots, stick to the schedule as much as possible. You don't want to find your evening is over and Square Roots are still untouched. (From www.about.com)

PAUW 27th confab set May 29

THE PHILIPPINE Association of University Women (PAUW) will hold its 27th Biennial Convention on Wednesday, May 29 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. This will be held at the Bulwagang Teresita U. Quirino, Graduate School Building, University of Sto. Tomas.

The theme for this year is "Peace, Abundance and Unity for Women." The program includes the awarding of the PAUW Medallion to deserving members past and present, inauguration of its web site and election of 2002-2004 officers and board members.

Dr. Rosario J. de Guzman, director IV of the Bureau of Non-Formal Education, will be the guest speaker. PAUW Affiliate Distinction Award will be given to Dr. Loreto C. Gloria, lawyer Lilia S. Garcia, Dr. Gloria S. Salandanan and Dr. Epifania V. Tabbada, Philippine Normal University, Francisca Bagasao, Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, Dr. Fara R. Santos, Saint Michael's College of Laguna, Dr. Linda R. Reyes, Centro Escolar University, Socorro E. Abueva and Alma L. Javier, University of the Philippines, professor Janet C. Flores (posthumous), Adamson University, and Helen P. Europeo, Technological Institute of the Philippines.

Ilang tulog na lang, pasukan na!

Junior INQUIRER

SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2002 ◆ 12 PAGES ◆ VOLUME 6, NUMBER 33

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WHAT'S INSIDE:

- **Letter For Lolo** Page 3
- **Bus to Mars** Page 4
- **Poetry: Tuwing Tag-araw** Page 6
- **The Lunch Box** Page 11

Jupiter's Secret

Astronomers confirm 11 more moons for Jupiter

JUPITER has 11 more moons than astronomers once thought, bringing the known total for the giant planet to 39, the most in our solar system, scientists reported.

The newly discovered moons—or satellites as astronomers call them—are small, far from the planet and have eccentric orbits, but they still count, researchers said in a statement.

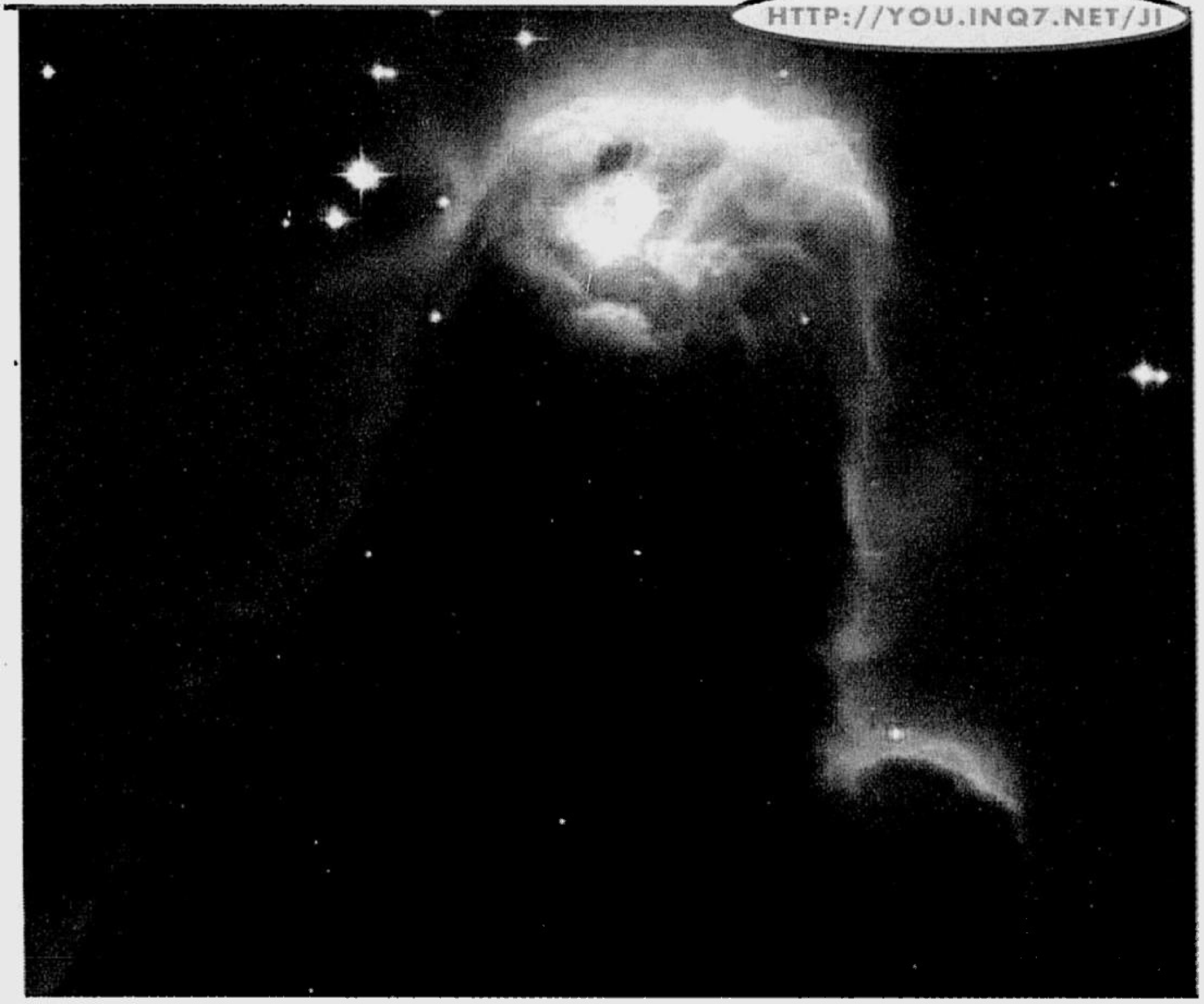
The new satellites were detected last December by astronomers at the University of Hawaii, using the Canada-France-Hawaii telescope and one of the largest digital imaging cameras in the world, the scientists said.

Digital images were processed with high-speed computers, and likely candidates were watched in the next months to confirm their orbits and to reject asteroids masquerading as moons.

All 11 new moons are considered irregular satellites. They all have retrograde orbits, meaning they go around Jupiter in the opposite direction to the planet's rotation.

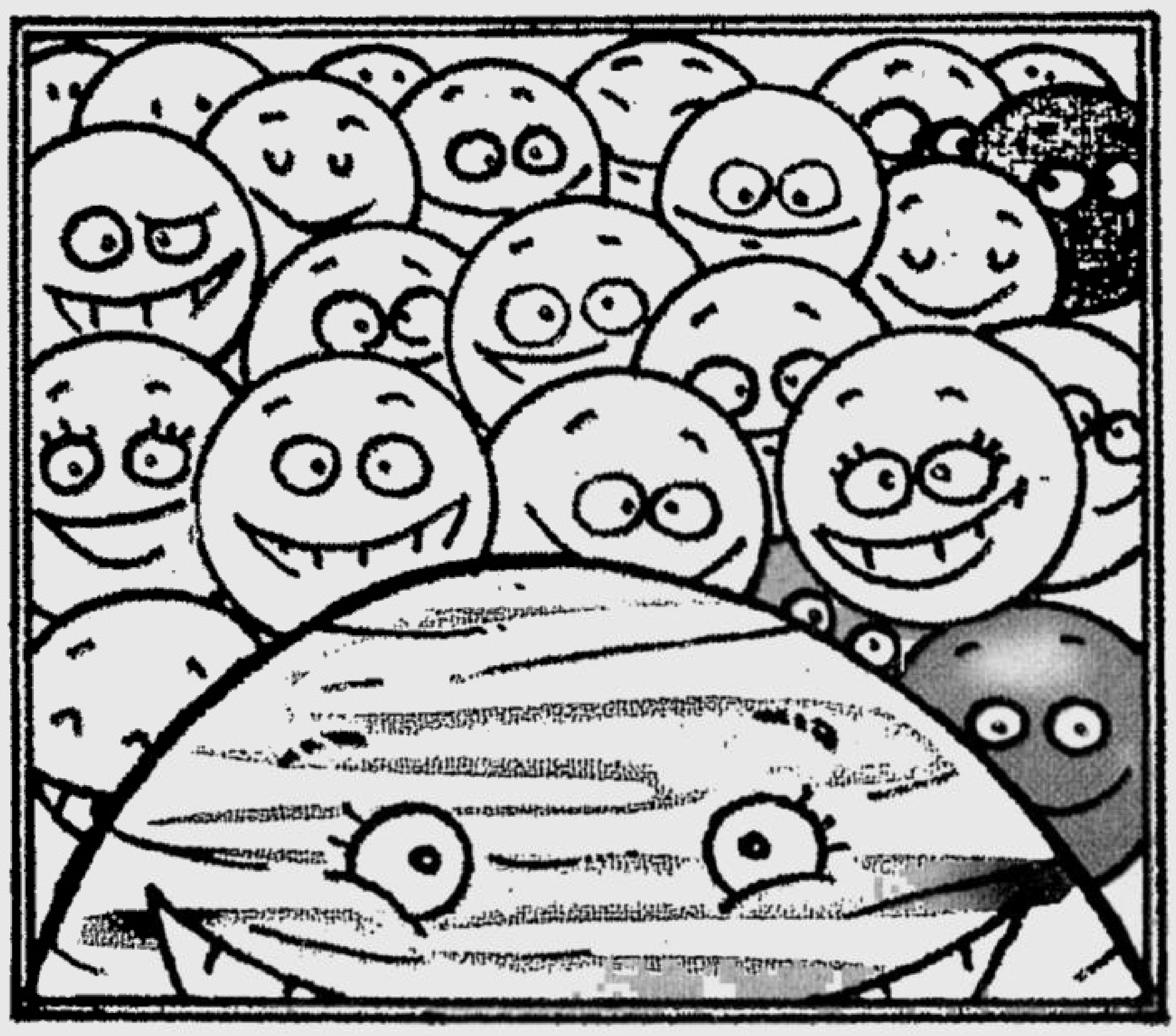
They have long, elliptical orbits, which suggest they were captured by Jupiter when the big

Jupiter's Secret/ p.10



THROUGH DISTANT EYES

LIKE an illustration in a Sci-Fi comic book or a scene in Startrek: Voyager, the Cone Nebula, M17 shines in crimson glory in outer space. This is not an imagined image. It's one of the pictures captured by the NASA Hubble Space Telescope's new Advanced Camera for Surveys. Astronomers have been flipping over the pictures since early April. *Nasa/Reuters*



My Week at the U.N.

JOHN Paul Claudio was one of the child delegates to the UN Special Session on Children in New York City on May 6-10. Here's a sneak peak into his New York Diary. See how hard your representative worked to make sure Filipino children's voices are heard!

May 3

IT WAS 8 a.m. when we boarded the plane bound for New York. That was a nice trip. The weather was fine and I was really excited.

We arrived in Tokyo after four hours for a stop over. Our plane departed Tokyo at around 2:10 p.m., Philippine time. I was enjoying the flight for the first three hours but soon, I felt uncomfortably bored. I wished there were a portal that could bring me to New York in minutes! Instead, I slept

My Week/ p.10

Perfect Shot!

Canon · JUNIOR INQUIRER
Summer Photography Workshop for Kids

FUN,FUN, AND MORE FUN! There's not enough of that word to describe how happy the 65 children who attended last Saturday's Summer Photography Workshop made possible by Canon Camera and the Junior Inquirer. It was a huge and surprising show-up of participants as many of them came with their parents from as far as outside Metro Manila.

The workshop was the start of three Saturdays of photo lecture that will run until May 25. The first day covered familiarization with the parts of a camera, taking good care of it and, lastly, how to frame your subjects as you take the pictures.

Famous professional photographer Ibarra Deri conducted the workshop. He was so cool with the kid participants with the bonus magic tricks he did to enliven the activity. The fun didn't stop there, however, as bundles of gifts courtesy of the event sponsors were distributed. Sponsors included Kids at Work, Lactum, Kameraworld, Nestle Chocolait and Henlin among others. Display booths of a few of the sponsors treated the kids to product samplings and additional promos.

Canon Camera's exclusive Philippine distributor: Super East Asia, promises to bring more surprises in the remaining workshops. To date, next Saturday's scheduled activities will include mascots from Nestle Chocolait and Henlin. They would be posing with the participants as the workshop moves on to a hands-on shooting session.

Look out Kid!

You could be missing on an chance to win a
BRAND NEW CANON CAMERA

Check the deadline of entries on the announcement below. We are now accepting pictures for both FUN IN THE SUN & PARTY BLOOPERS themes to be published on our May 25 issue. So submit your winning entries directly to the Philippine Daily Inquirer office c/o Masoy of the Marketing Department, NOW! Deadline for both themes have been moved to May 20, 2002.

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MECHANICS

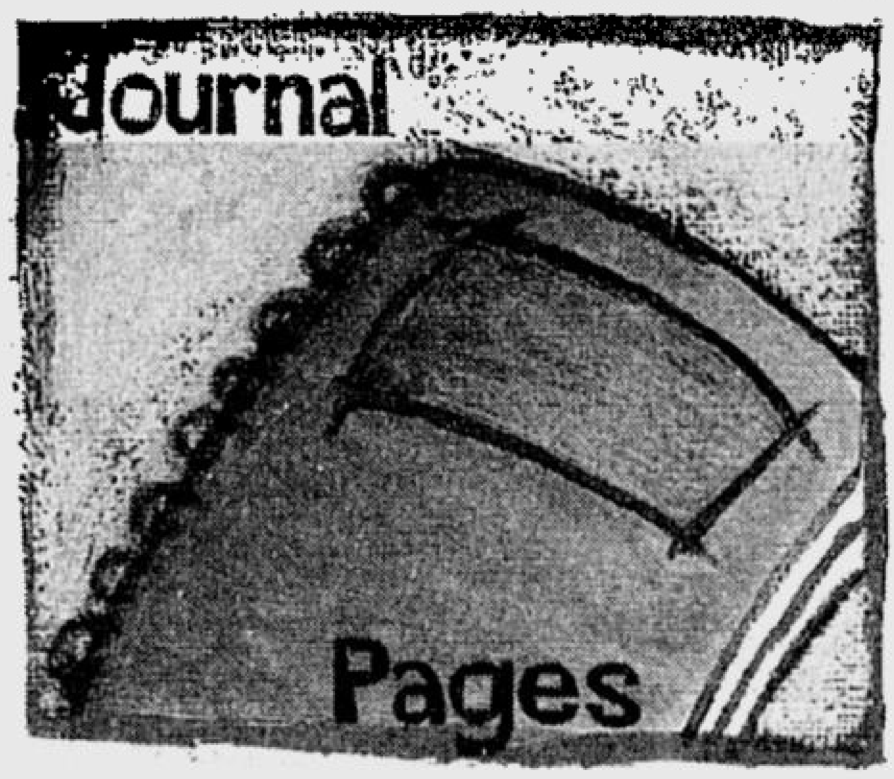
1 Send your entries/photographs to Junior Inquirer, c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer Chino Roces Ave., Pasong Tamo cor Yague & Mascardo Sts., Makati City on or before the deadline. (See Schedule below)

2 In a sheet of paper, write a short description/essay of your entry, together with your name, address, telephone number, signature, entry date & theme. You may also include your 2x2 ID picture.

3 Chosen entries will receive one unit of **Canon BF 800 Camera.**

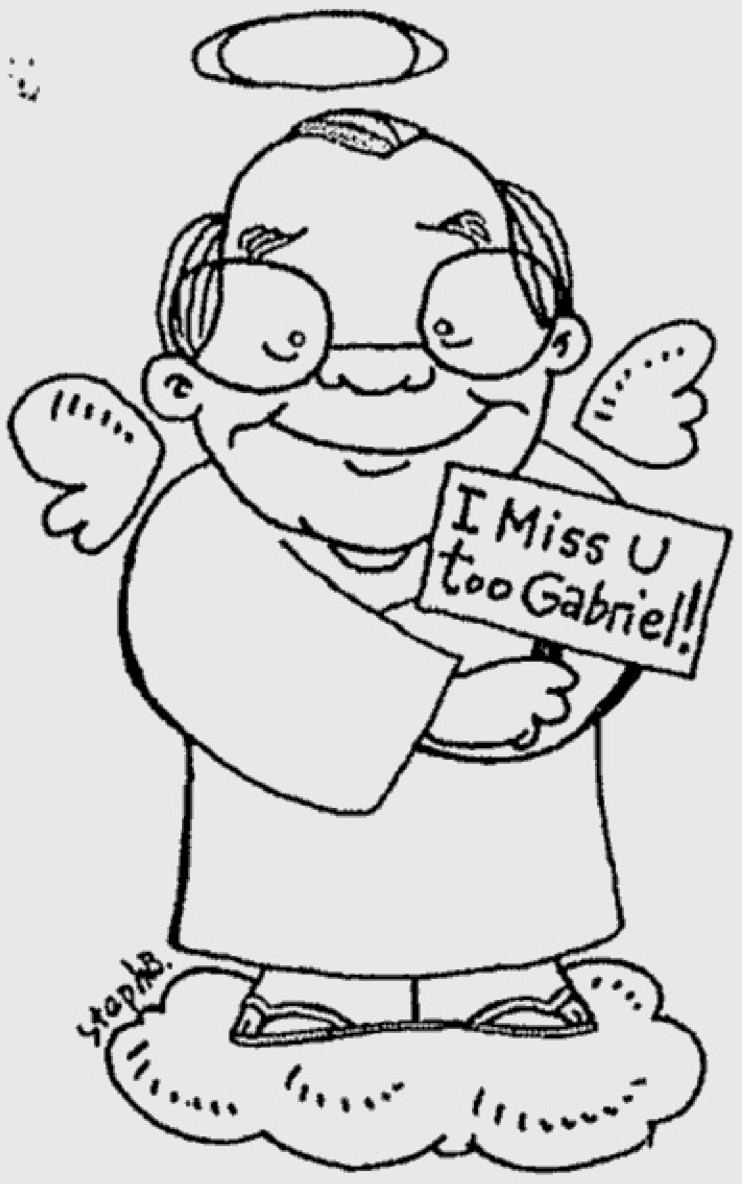
For any questions, please call PROJECTIONALS at 660-7531 660-2780 email prjctnls@info.com.ph or projectionals@edsamail.com.ph

DEADLINE OF ENTRIES	PUBLICATION DATE	THEME
May 10	May 18	Fun in the Sun
May 17	May 25	Party Bloopers
May 24	June 1	Me and my Junior Inquirer
June 1	June 8	Me and my Dad
June 7	June 15	Best Friends in School
June 14	June 22	Thing I love most
June 21	June 29	Happy Together
June 28	July 6	I love my Mom
July 5	July 13	Kids @ work



For Lolo

by Gabriel Martin Doller
Ateneo Grade School


I Miss U too Gabriel!

DEAR Lolo,

How is everything up there? Please send my love to God, even though I talk to Him through prayer. So how are you? Oh, what a nonsensical question. Of course you're doing great, you're in heaven! I guess I can't surprise you anymore with this letter because you're probably beside me, reading my letter to you.

Though you are right beside me, I find myself missing you. I guess it's because we had so much fun together when you were still alive. I really miss the times when we went to the many restaurants that you liked, including Barrio Fiesta, Balaw-balaw and, yes, Greenwich. There we talked about many things, from news to food to books. I really enjoyed those talks.

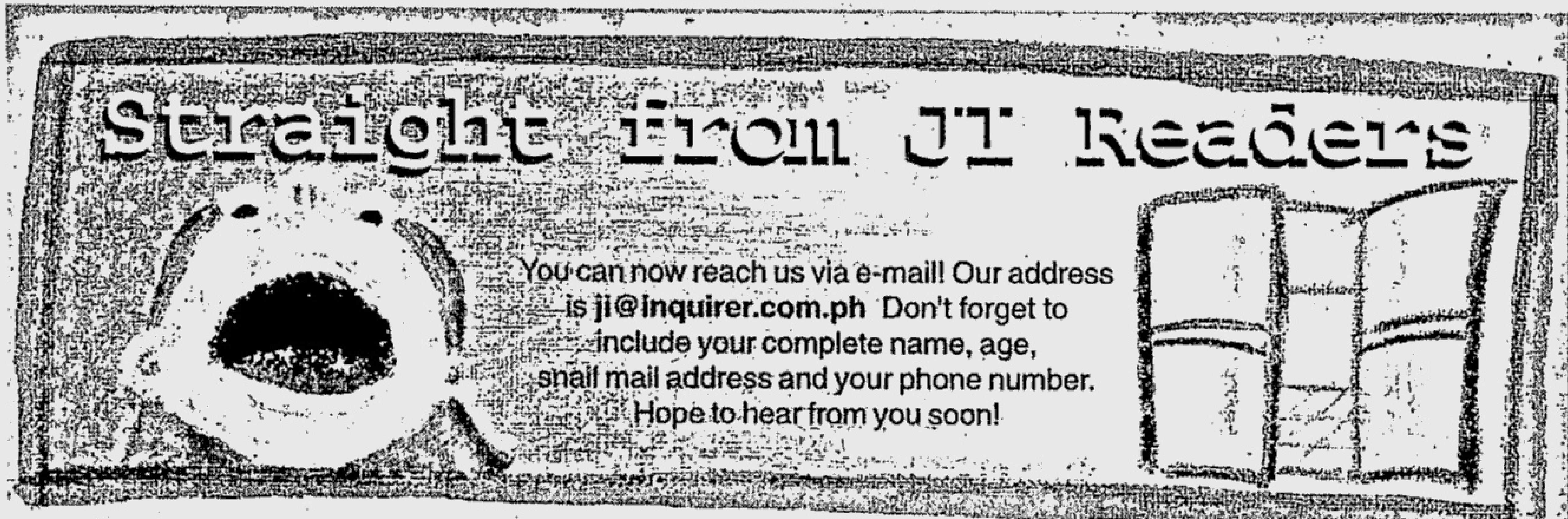
Now I feel a certain void when I go to the places we've been to. The festivity has faded, the joy a quarter gone.

I also miss the exciting arrivals that you and Lola and Tita and Tito made here in our house every vacation and Christmas. There was always a tingle of cheer in every moment you were here: from the time your luggage was carried into the house, to the family's nice long chats over *sinukmani* and *bibingka*. There was cheer even when Dad carried you to your bed when you began to get sick.

For Lolo/p.12

Sound Familiar ?

Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!



Straight from JI Readers

You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!

Ernie's Fan

DEAR Editor,

My day is not complete without reading Junior Inquirer every Saturday. I've been reading it for so long. I love reading JI because it gives me information and makes me laugh. I also love how Ernie Sambo designs graphics. I get inspired when I read articles, inspirational essays and stories by students like me. So keep up the good work of making readers smile. I really appreciate it! **–MARIANNE B. SABERON**, 12, St. Benedict College, Muntinlupa City

THANK YOU! I WILL DO MY BEST TO INSPIRE YOU MORE!

Junior Inquirer

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Junior Inquirer (JI) welcomes your views, suggestions, essays, short stories and poems. All contributions must be typewritten double-spaced on short bond paper. Contributions without a self-addressed, stamped envelope will not be returned.

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Philippines

World Scope

Columbia Falls, USA
Las Vegas, USA
West Lafayette, Indiana
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Bliss

WHO can resist a cute puppy? Well, this female monkey couldn't. The pet monkey, bought from an animal trader, "adopted" the puppy recently and spends many happy hours hugging it. Hunting and selling of monkeys are prohibited under Bangladesh laws but they are seldom enforced. ***Reuters***

Bus to Mars

JAMES Longuski, an aerospace engineering professor poses in his office at Purdue University. Longuski designs the mathematically complex trajectories or pathways needed for so-called "cycler" spacecraft such as the proposed Mars hotels depicted on the monitor. The Mars hotels would continually travel between Earth and the Red Planet, guided and propelled by the gravitational forces of the two planets. ***AP***

Bear Needs Bear Hug

A GRIZZLY bear cub, found abandoned May 5 north of Whitefish, Montana, recuperates in a cage at the home of biologist Tim Manley. Caretakers were feeding it a bottle of formula every two hours (which accounts for the mustache). The cub, weighing about 3.2 kilos, was later taken to a wildlife shelter in Helena and will probably be sent to the Grizzly Bear Discovery Center in West Yellowstone. ***AP***

Attack of the Fans

STORM troopers, they are not. Costumed Star Wars fans, they are. Off to see the premiere of "Star Wars: Episode II – Attack of the Clones" at a downtown movie house. May the Force be with them! ***AP***

OUT THERE

By Christine A. Palta

Workshop

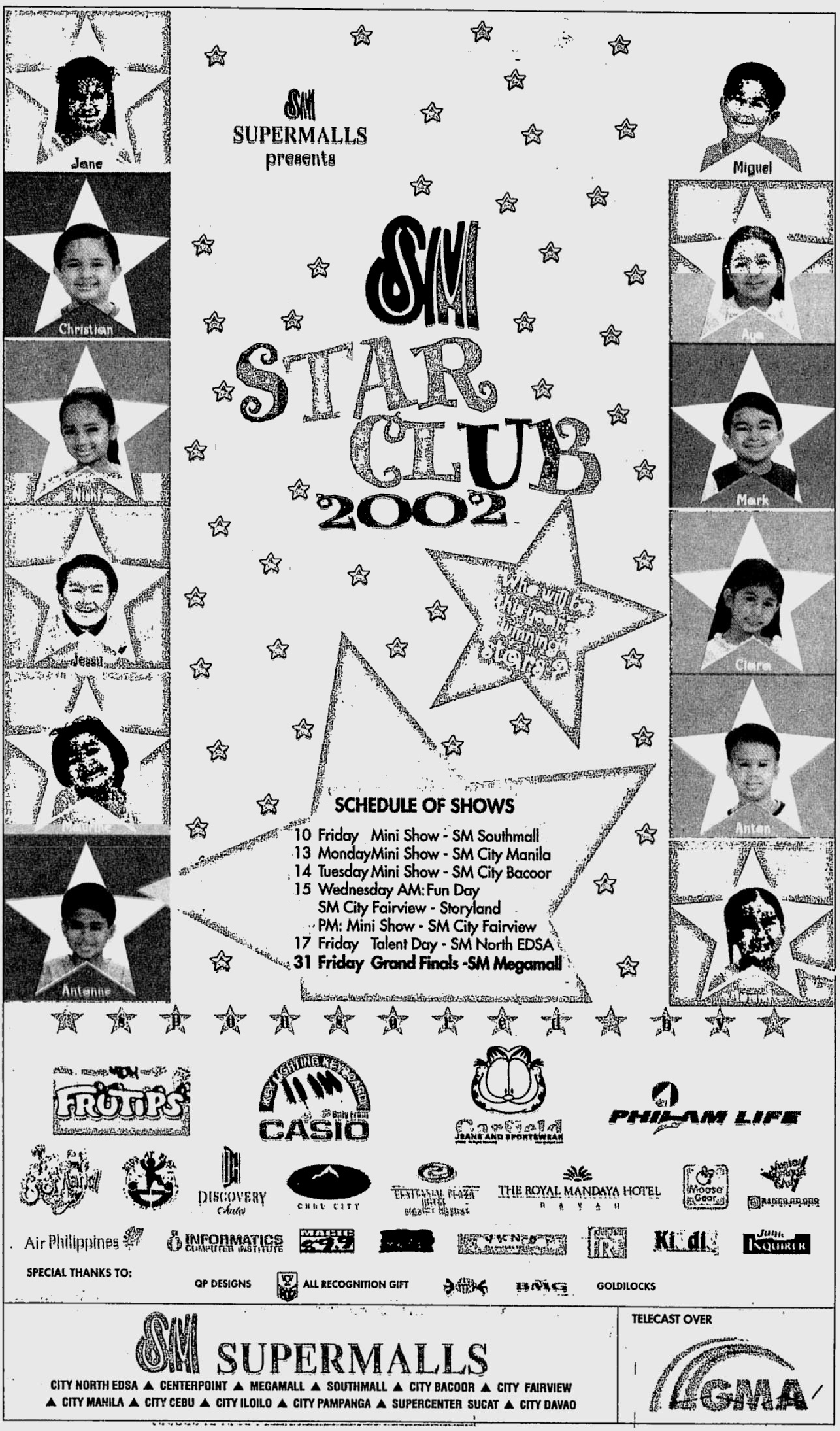
CAMP AQUA. Can't take the summer heat? Then join Bert Lozada Swim School's "Camp Aqua". "Camp Aqua" is an aquatic sports camp where kids and adults, even babies, can **learn swimming and scuba-diving** from internationally trained coaches. Programs for kids and adults range from water safety to basic, advance and competitive swimming. There's also the "My Baby and Me" parent-and-child swimming program for babies 6 months to 3 years old. For more info, please call 563-5532/564-4648 or 805-0237.

Event

TECHIE SUMMER. Classes are about to start, and kids may need to warm up their brains and skills as well. Intel gives you a chance to do this in its Intel Technology Festival, ongoing this May until June 1. Get connected with the latest technology in computers and other hi-tech gadgets while enjoying exciting games, contests, and other fun and educational activities. Visit the festival at the Glorietta e-Lounge in Ayala Center, Makati City. For more info, please call Grace or Jinny at 893-3308 or email group3@seinc.com.ph.

Exhibit

YOUNG ARTISTS. After its recently concluded school tour workshops, Faber-Castell showcases the works of elementary students from various schools in its exhibit, "Art Through A Child's Eyes." The exhibit is open to the public and runs until May 31 at the Vargas Museum in the University of the Philippines, Quezon City. For more info on Faber-Castell activities, please call the Marketing Department at 361-7391-92.



SM SUPERMALLS presents

SM STAR CLUB 2002

SCHEDULE OF SHOWS

10 Friday Mini Show - SM Southmall
13 Monday Mini Show - SM City Manila
14 Tuesday Mini Show - SM City Bacoor
15 Wednesday AM: Fun Day
SM City Fairview - Storyland
PM: Mini Show - SM City Fairview
17 Friday Talent Day - SM North EDSA
31 Friday Grand Finals - SM Megamall

FRUTIPS CASIO Garfield JEANS AND SPORTSWEAR PHILAM LIFE
DISCOVERY Suites THE ROYAL MANDAYA HOTEL DAVAO Moose Gear
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CITY NORTH EDSA ▲ CENTERPOINT ▲ MEGAMALL ▲ SOUTHMALL ▲ CITY BACOOR ▲ CITY FAIRVIEW
▲ CITY MANILA ▲ CITY CEBU ▲ CITY ILOILO ▲ CITY PAMPANGA ▲ SUPERCENTER SUCAT ▲ CITY DAVAO

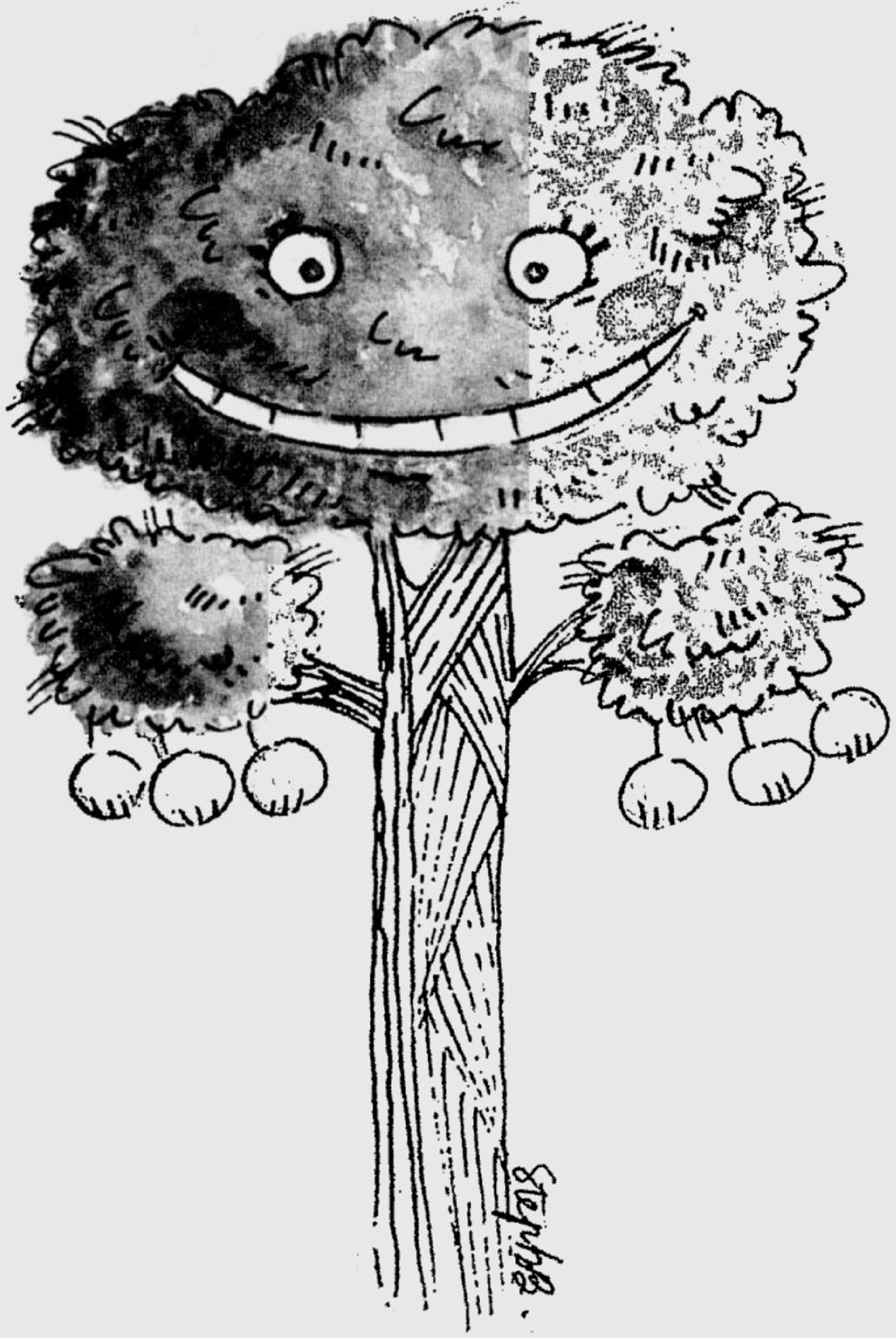
TELECAST OVER GMA

Tuwing Tag-araw

Mga Tula ni Genaro R. Gojo Cruz
Guhit ni Stephanie Bravo

Ang Balon

Kay lamig ng tubig sa balon.
Kay linaw ng tubig na tila isang salamin.
Dahan-dahan kaming sasalok
Upang di mabulabog ang mga dumi
Na tumining.
Halinhinan sa tabo,
Kanya-kanyang salok ng tubig.
Magsasabuyan kami
Hanggang init ay maglaho.
Hiyawan kaming magkakaibigan
Dahil tubig sa balon ay nakakakiliti.
Papauwi,
Bawat isa sa ami'y puno ng ngiti
Dahil init ng tag-araw ay tuluyang napawi.



Ang Puno ng Santol

Kung tatanawin sa malayo,
Tila mga bumbilyang nakasabit
Sa puno ang mga santol.
Bilog na bilog.
Lumulundoy-lundoy.

Magsisiakyat kami,
Unahan sa pagkuha
Sa pinakahinog na bunga.
Maliliit lamang ang santol
Ngunit tamis ay sobra-sobra.
Ilalabas ang asin na binilot sa papel.
At sa ilalim ng punong santol,
Kakainin namin ang mga santol
Na pinaghirapang akyatin.

Pa

At
La
Sa daa

Mga lik
Sa ha
Pipiliin n
At sak

M
Sa hang
Talagan
Ang

mimisikleta

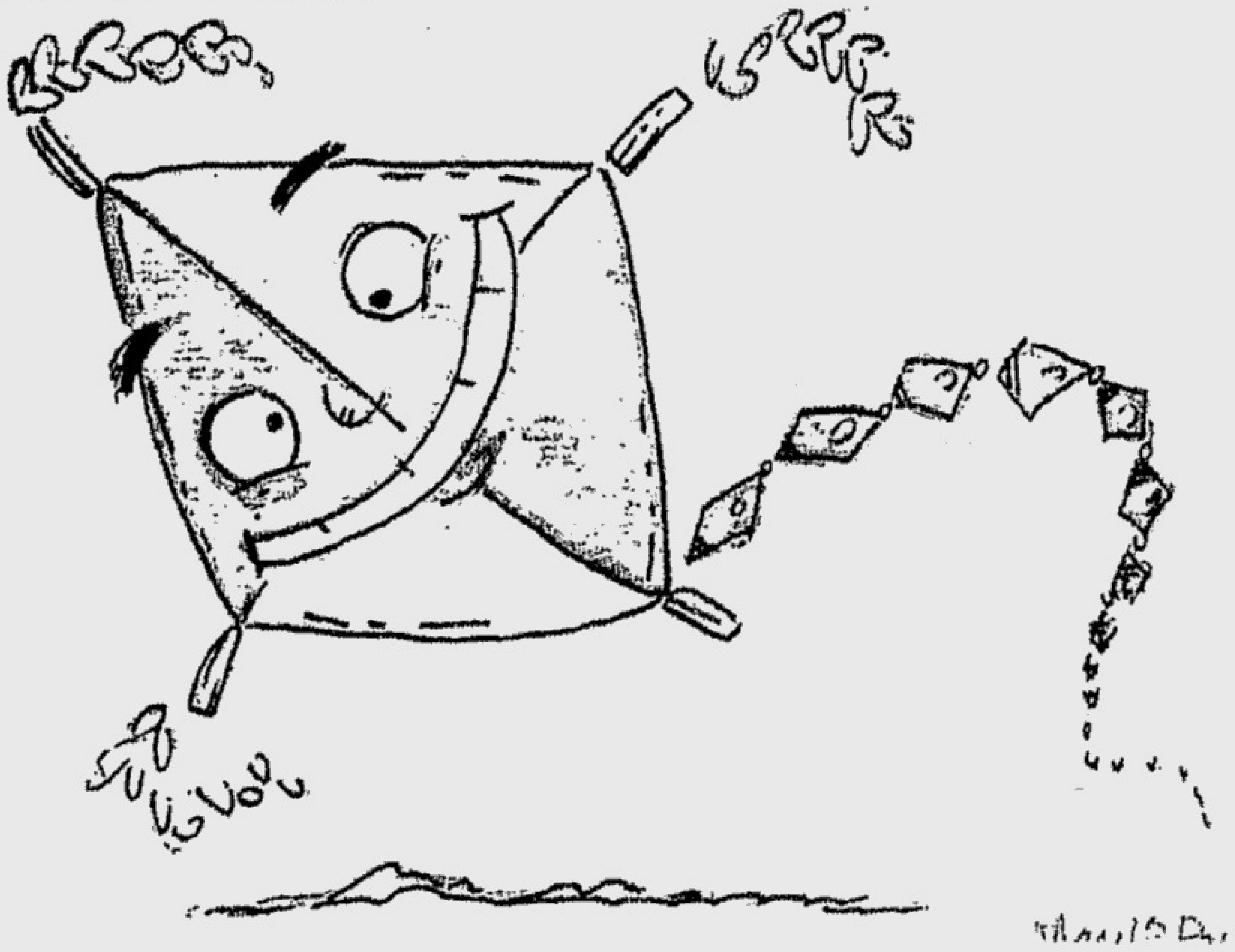
Kapag sobrang init
pawis ay tumatagaktak,
gi kaming namimisikleta
nang bihira ang dumaraang
sasakyan.
od namin tila nagkakapakpak
nging likha ng aming pedal.
amin ang papalusong na daan
a pepedalin ang bisikletang
Walang kapaguran.
lapupuno kami ng saya
ing kumikiliti sa aming tenga.
g kay ligaya kapag kumpleto
makukulay na bisikleta.

Ang Saranggola

Anong sayang magpalipad
Ng saranggola sa bukid na malawak.

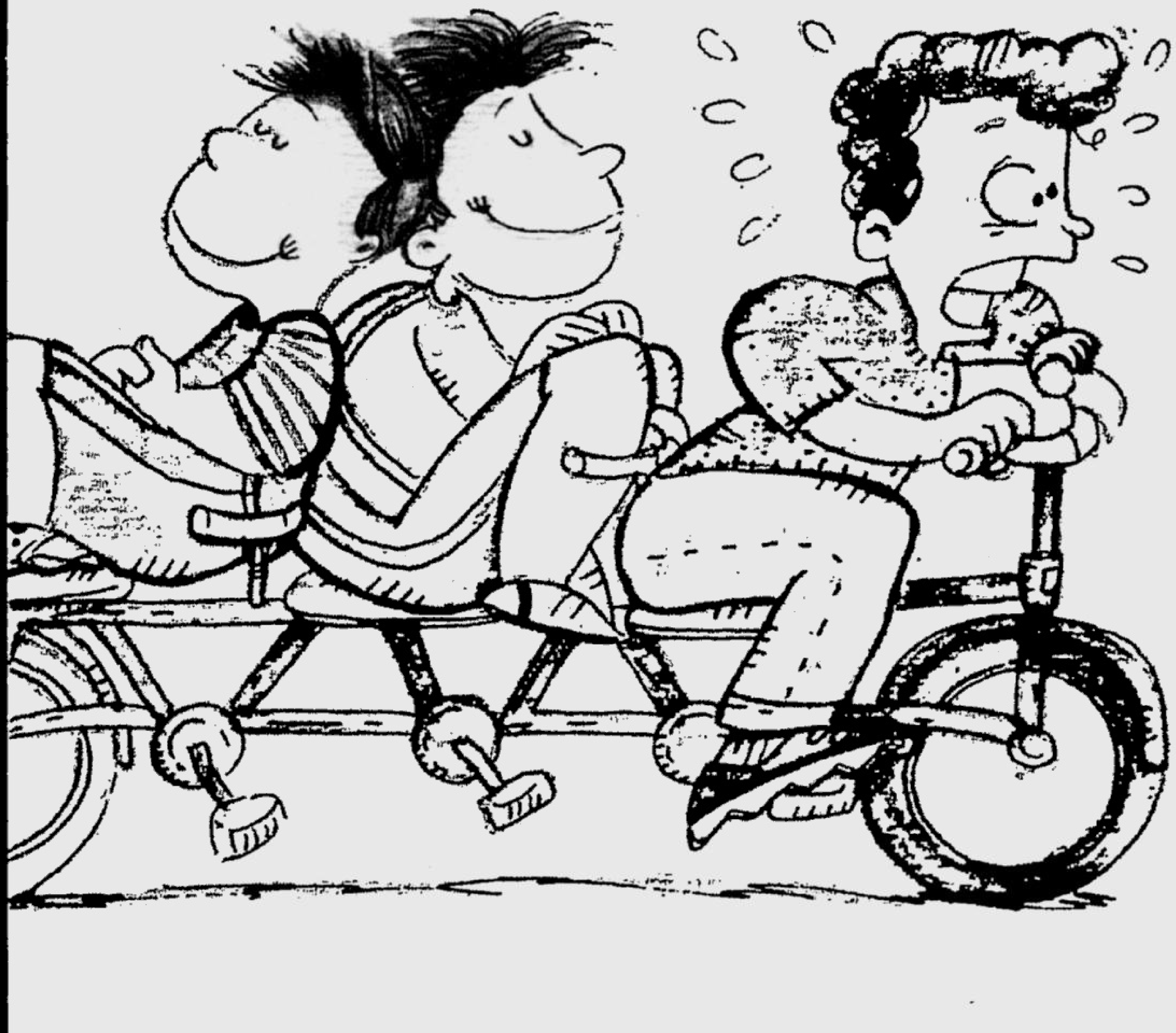
Walang mga bahay,
Poste at kawad ng kuryenteng
Maaaring sabitan ng pisi.

Saranggola'y malayang-malayang
Makalilipad sa langit na bughaw;
May lipad na matining,
May lipad na sumisirko-sirko.
Habang tumitingkad ang mga kulay
Ng saranggola,
Kami nama'y walang kapaguran
Sa pagtingala.
Kay gandang pagmasdan
Ang saranggolang tila kaibigan
Na ng Haring araw.



*Si **Genaro** ay tubong Bulacan. Mahilig siyang umakyat sa puno ng santol, mangga, sinigwelas at kaymito. Mga punong namumunga tuwing sasapit ang tag-araw.*

*Si **Steph** ay tubong Maynila. Noong maliit siya, lagi na lang siyang nagbabakasyon tuwing tag-araw sa Lucena, Quezon kasama ang kanyang mga pinsan. Mahilig daw silang lumangoy sa mga swimming pool at kumain ng pansit araw-araw.*



Tell us how will you
CHILL-OUT
this summer?
You could win some cool prizes:
- Toy Showcases from Richwell
- Enchanted Kingdom Themepark Tickets
- Cow & Chicken Inflatable Boat
- Courage The Cowardly Dog Inflatable Frisbee
- I Am Weasel Inflatable TV
For more details, tune in to Cartoon Network.
*Promotion runs until May 31, 2002
CARTOON NETWORK

Co-sponsor & prize sponsor:
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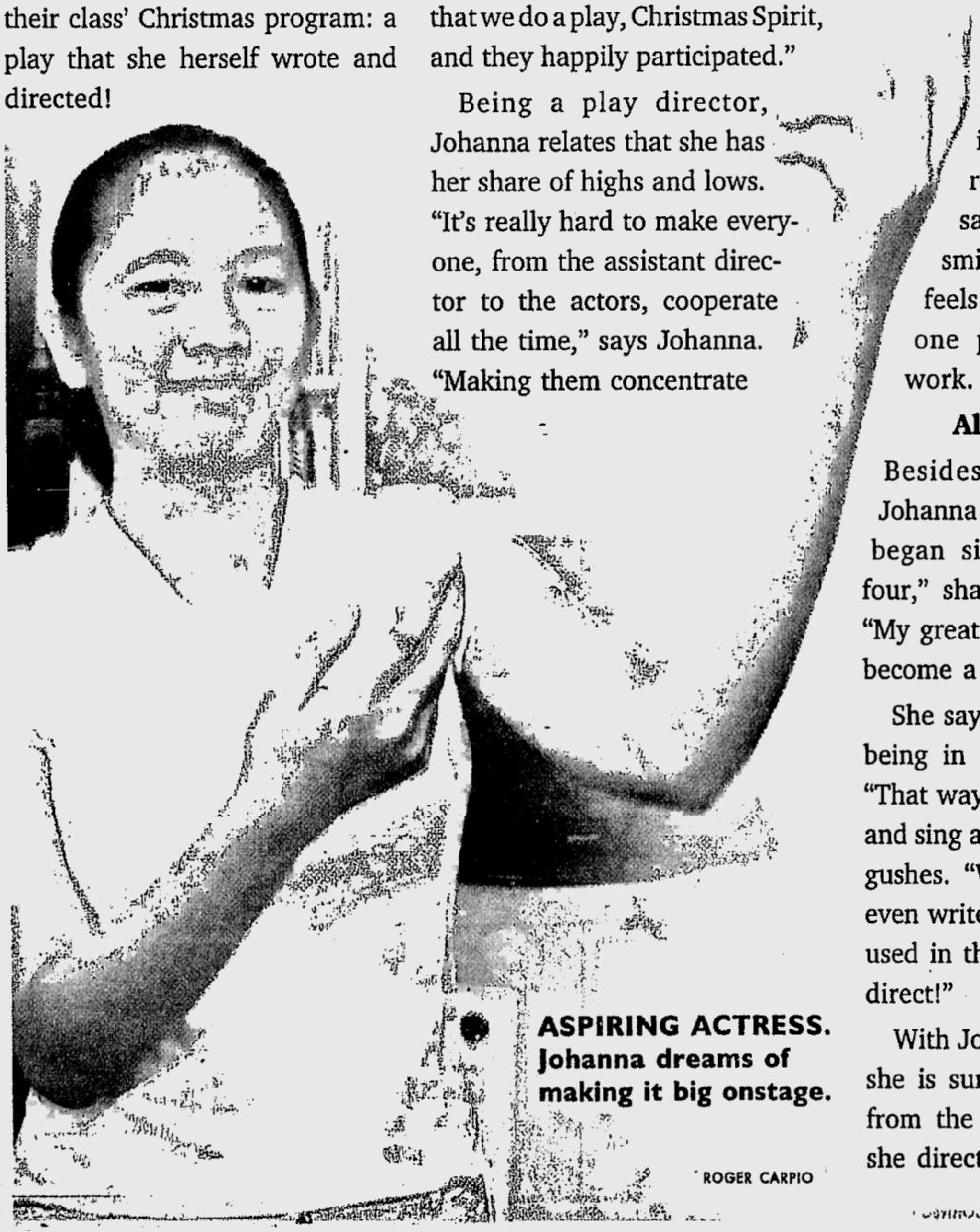
Competition fine print: "No purchase necessary. For a full set of the terms and conditions please write to P.O. Box 1807, Makati Central Post Office, 1258 Makati City, Philippines. Void where prohibited. Open to residents of Philippines only. Competition ends on May 31, 2002"

Lights, Camera, Action!

A young playwright speaks

BY MARGPAUX ORTIZ

FOR two years now, 13-year-old Johanna Buenavente has been looking forward to the approach of the Christmas season. She gets revved up whenever she thinks about the would-be highlight of their class' Christmas program: a play that she herself wrote and directed!



ASPIRING ACTRESS. Johanna dreams of making it big onstage.

ROGER CARPIO

"My classmates and I agreed that our annual Christmas program, which was made up of the usual song and dance numbers, needed spicing up," says the (incoming) seventh-grader from Miriam Grade School. "I proposed that we do a play, Christmas Spirit, and they happily participated."

Being a play director, Johanna relates that she has her share of highs and lows. "It's really hard to make everyone, from the assistant director to the actors, cooperate all the time," says Johanna. "Making them concentrate on their roles and keeping their attention is particularly challenging."

But she relates that the time and effort she pours into writing and directing plays pays off in the end. "Whenever my classmates appreciate the play's story and enjoy acting out their assigned roles, I feel gratified," says Johanna with a smile. She adds that she feels good even if only one person praises her work.

Also A Singer

Besides directing plays, Johanna also loves to sing. "I began singing when I was four," shares the 13-year-old. "My greatest wish is in fact to become a singer."

She says that she dreams of being in a musical someday. "That way I could be in a play and sing at the same time," she gushes. "Who knows, I could even write songs that could be used in the future plays I will direct!"

With Johanna's grand plans, she is sure to go a long way from the first Christmas play she directed.

R U 'RRIFIC?

'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done

Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
Hey 'Rrific kid!
We know you're there
We love you 'cause you're you!

If you think you're 'Rrific' or know someone who is, fill out the the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces
cor. Yague & Mascardo Sts.
1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a

FREE Junior Inquirer & CASIO EMI T-shirt, Plus! a chance to win a Keylighting keyboard!

Kids'r'rrific
nomination form

I nominate: ____________________

Age: ____________________

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because: (Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)

She/he lives at ____________________

and studies at ____________________

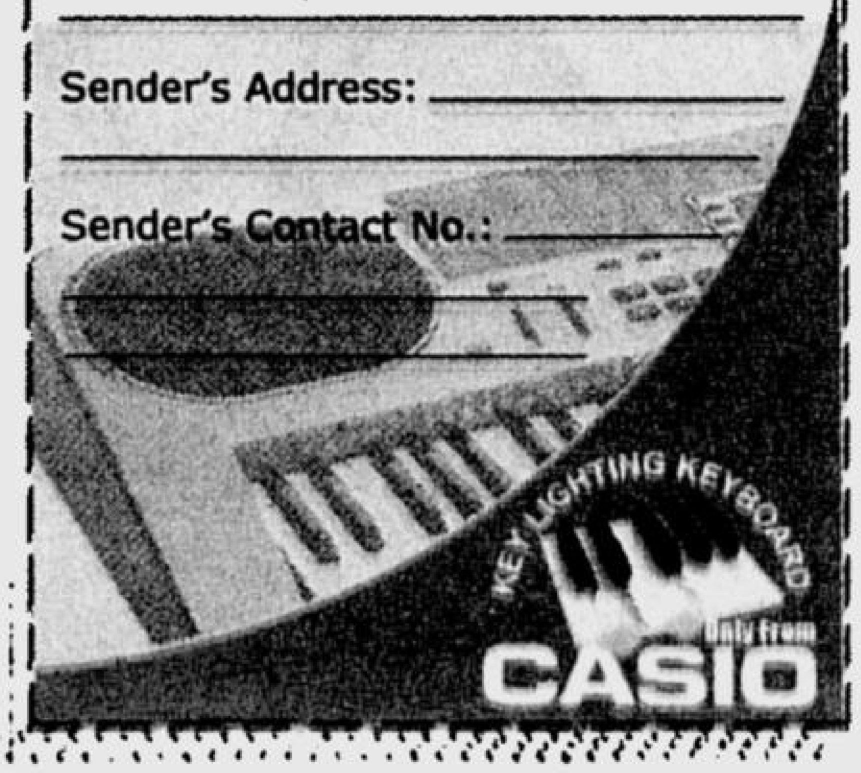
Her/his contact number is: ____________________

Sender's Name: ____________________

Sender's Age & School: ____________________

Sender's Address: ____________________

Sender's Contact No.: ____________________



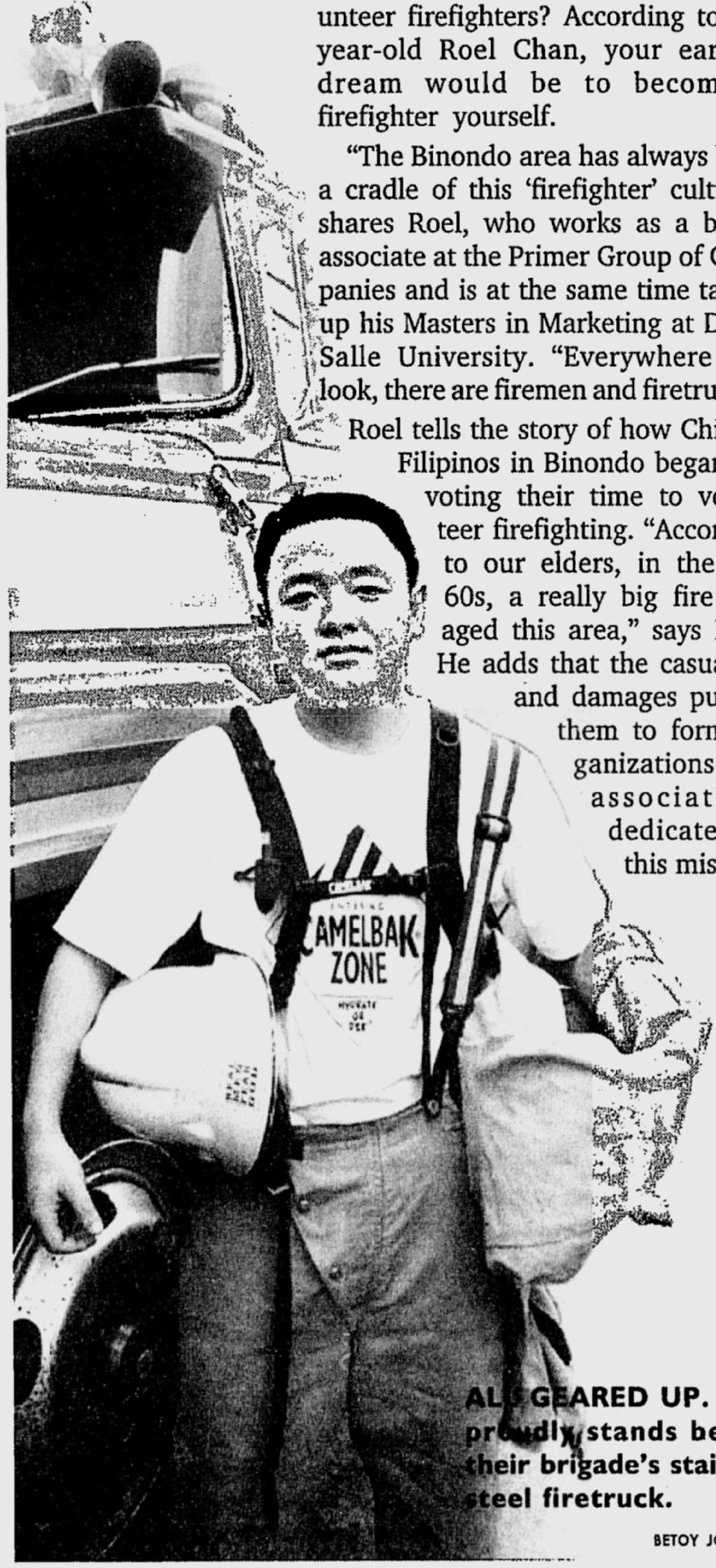
The Amazing Fireman

BY MARGAUX ORTIZ

What happens when your father, almost all your cousins, and nearly everybody in the neighborhood are volunteer firefighters? According to 23-year-old Roel Chan, your earliest dream would be to become a firefighter yourself.

"The Binondo area has always been a cradle of this 'firefighter' culture," shares Roel, who works as a brand associate at the Primer Group of Companies and is at the same time taking up his Masters in Marketing at De La Salle University. "Everywhere you look, there are firemen and firetrucks."

Roel tells the story of how Chinese Filipinos in Binondo began devoting their time to volunteer firefighting. "According to our elders, in the late 60s, a really big fire ravaged this area," says Roel. He adds that the casualties and damages pushed them to form organizations and associations dedicated to this mission.



ALL GEARED UP. Roel proudly stands beside their brigade's stainless steel firetruck.

BETOY JOHNSON

Roel was 14 years old when he first joined the Chinatown Volunteer Fire Brigade. For eight years, he was involved in fire rescue. "I have been an actual firefighter for only the past two years. Before that, our job was to be in charge of the ambulance and look out for the safety of the firemen." Part of their duty was to check for alternative exits for the firemen, take note of what part of the burning building could collapse, and count how many people are at the fire scene so they could be sure of the number of casualties.

Caring Fireman

"I initially wanted to become a firefighter because of the thrill, the adventures that come with being a hero," says Roel. "But once the whole thing is over and the fire subsides, and I see people crying over their losses, it is then that I feel that what I do has a worth deeper than fame or temporary honor," he adds.

He adds that it is this rewarding feeling of having helped people that keeps these volunteer firemen going. "We are not being paid for what we do, after all," says the Roel. "We even pay for our gear and other firefighting equipment. We freely give up our time and energy for this because we love what we're doing and we feel it is necessary."

Roel shares that there are times when he feels a little tired from rushing to fire scenes every now and then. But quitting permanently has never crossed his mind. "I think that being a fireman doesn't mean that your house is invincible from fire," he says. "I'll keep on doing this with my family's safety in mind, and with the knowledge that a lot more houses and families are safer because of the little time we sacrificed for this mission."

Indeed, heroes need not have superhuman capabilities or great powers. They might just be, like Roel, living in your neighborhood.

Do you know a grown-up who

- is fun to be with
- has an exciting job
- keeps an amazing hobby
- is all of the above???

If you know a grown-up whom all kids will love, give him or her the stamp:

A.K.A. COOL

Just fill out the nomination form below and tell us why your fave grown-up is the absolute coolest. If your nominee is chosen, ***YOU'LL*** *get a free JI T-shirt! Now that's really cool.*

A.K.A. COOL
is an 'adult known as cool'
They're the folks
in our own family
Or the people
we meet in school.

I nominate ________________.
He/She is ______ years old and is my____________________.
Here are five super solid reasons why I think you should write about him/her:
1)______________________;
2)______________________;
3)______________________;
4)______________________;
5)______________________.

My nominee lives at________ ______________________.
Give him/her a call at ________
or send him/her an e-mail at ____ ______________________.
By the way, I'm ____________ ______________________.
I'm________ years old.
My address is____________ ______________________.
You may call me at__________ ______________________.

Jupiter's Secret...(from page 1)

planet was young, perhaps in the first million years of the solar system's existence.

They are all quite small, with diameters between 1.2 miles and 2.5 miles. Nothing is known about what they are made of, how dense they are or what their surfaces are like, but scientists presume they are asteroid-like space rocks.

Among Jupiter's 39 known satellites, 31 are irregulars. The eight regular satellites consist of four large moons and four smaller ones.

Jupiter's nearest rival for having the largest number of known satellites is Saturn, with 30. ***Reuters***

My Week...(from page 1)

and slept some more until we landed in New York at around 3:20 p.m., US time. At last! It was a dream come true! I thought to myself, "This is the most wonderful thing that has happened in my life."

May 4

We got up early and went to the UNICEF building for the orientation. I was very happy to see children from other East Asian countries. I even saw some kids whom I already met in past activities. Well, we're in a hurry so I'll have to end here for now. You'll hear from me again soon!

May 5

We went to the United Nations building at around 8:30 a.m. for the opening of the ceremony. I was very happy—for the first time, I met the other children from other countries, from Southeast Asia to North America...What excited me most was the presence of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. One thing that really inspires me is the presence of many child speakers. They're really vocal and happy to share their ideas with us.

May 6

Second day is a new day at the Manhattan center. The atmosphere was fine and other children are very excited about the day's activities. I was chosen to join the committee of rapporteur, which is in charge of drafting and reporting on the outcome documents.

May 7

We at the rapporteur committee worked to come up with a statement to be presented at the UN General Assembly. The statement mainly focused on our demands for the governments, such as free quality education, an end to all conflicts, a more friendly environment for disabled people, accessible free consultation and treatment centers for HIV/AIDS prevention and curing, and promotion and creation of partnerships between children, gov-

My Week/ p.12

¿ThinkathoN?
BY BONG BARRAMEDA

Face Your Fear

DO you have a compelling fear of something (or someone), but don't know what it's called? Well, fear no more because we've listed down a dozen of the most "popular" phobias ever known. Go ahead, simply pick the item that matches each phobia (unless you're *testophobic* – a person with a morbid fear of taking tests like this!)

1. Arachnophobia
   - ○ Liquor
   - ○ Spiders
   - ○ Ara Mina
2. Claustrophobia
   - ○ Enclosed places
   - ○ Being near to somebody
   - ○ Santa Claus
3. Aviophobia
   - ○ Medicine
   - ○ Birds
   - ○ Flying
4. Monophobia
   - ○ Being alone
   - ○ Boring people
   - ○ Quiet places
5. Triskaidekaphobia
   - ○ Number 13
   - ○ Explosions
   - ○ Tricycles
6. Glossophobia
   - ○ Bright rooms
   - ○ Reading
   - ○ Speaking in public
7. Ergophobia
   - ○ Work
   - ○ Making mistakes
   - ○ Waking up early
8. Brontophobia
   - ○ Thunder
   - ○ Bad breath
   - ○ Dinosaurs
9. Muriphobia
   - ○ Mice
   - ○ Snakes
   - ○ Blindness
10. Tomophobia
    - ○ Tomorrow
    - ○ Tomatoes
    - ○ Surgical operations
11. Scolionophobia
    - ○ School
    - ○ Scoliosis
    - ○ Scolding
12. Rhytiphobia
    - ○ Colds
    - ○ Music
    - ○ Wrinkles

Answerss :

1. Spiders
2. Enclosed places
3. Flying
4. Being alone
5. Number 13
6. Speaking in public
7. Work
8. Thunder
9. Mice
10. Surgical operations
11. School
12. Wrinkles

Ratings :

superbrain!
excellent!
good!

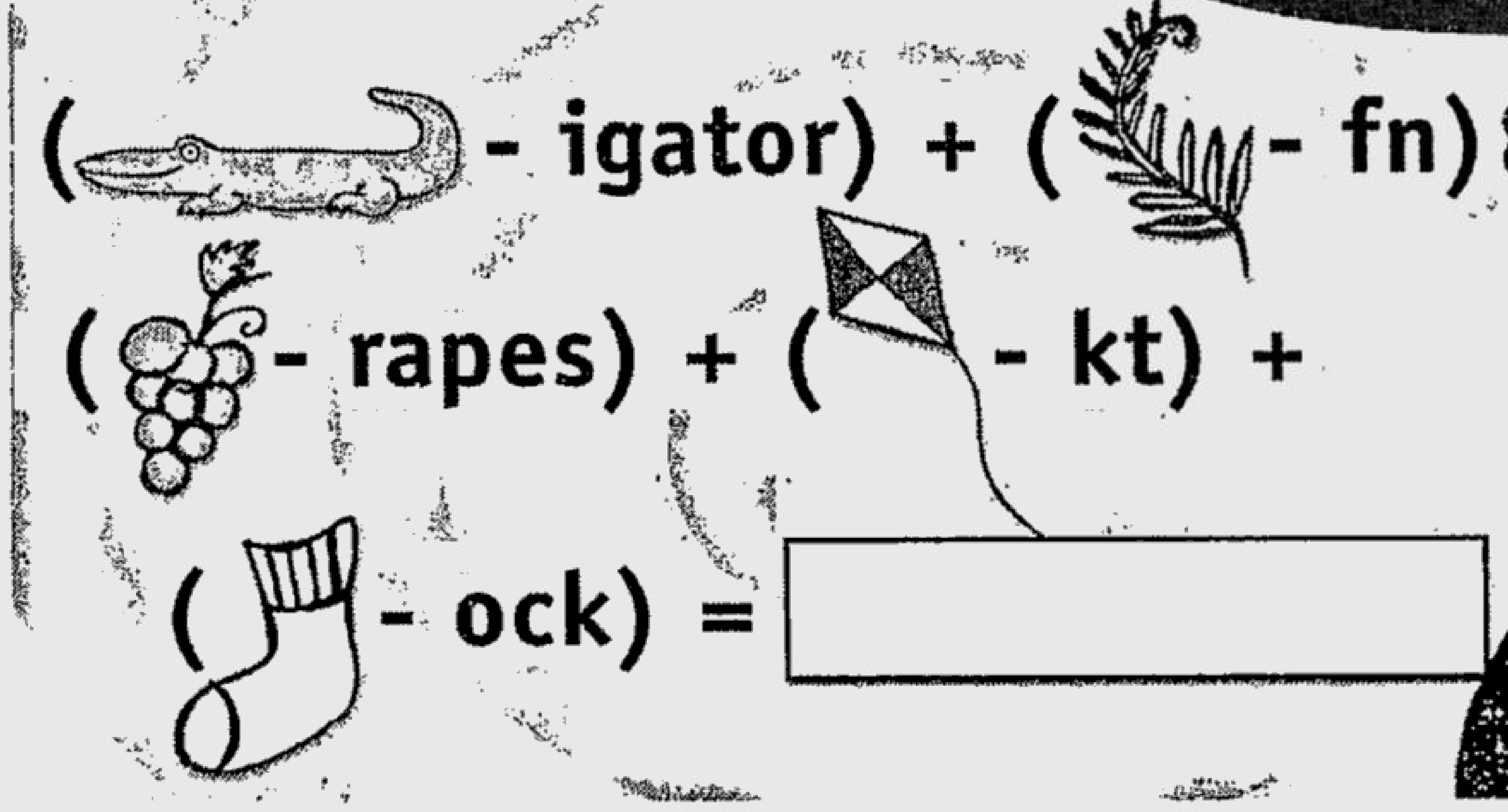
11-12 **9-10** **6-8**

THE LUNCH BOX

by Katrina B. Villa

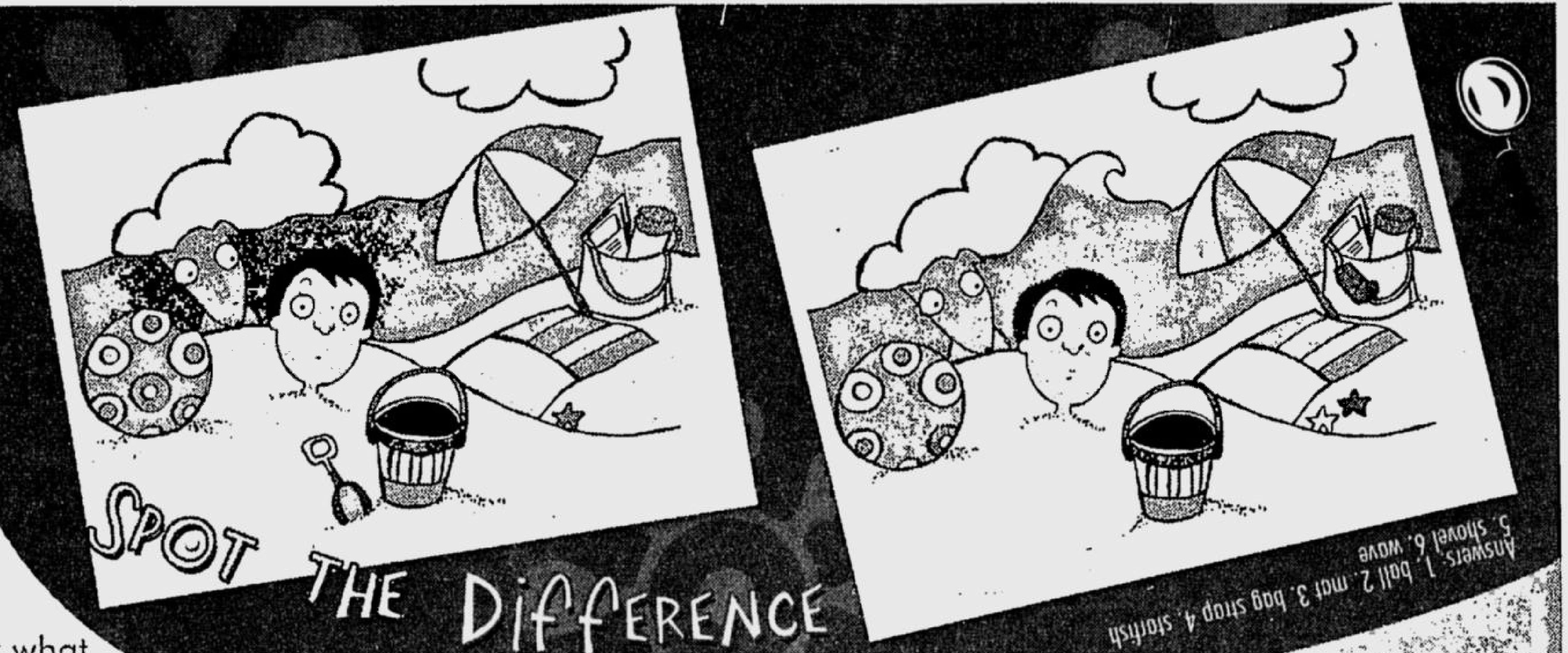
WORDMATH

May is the month of flowers, but John isn't too happy. Solve the word equation below to discover what John's problem is.



(- igator) + (- fn)
(- rapes) + (- kt) +
(- ock) =

Answer: John has allergies.



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

There are six in these photos of Art and Bernard!

Answers: 1. ball 2. mat 3. bag strap 4. starfish 5. shovel 6. wave

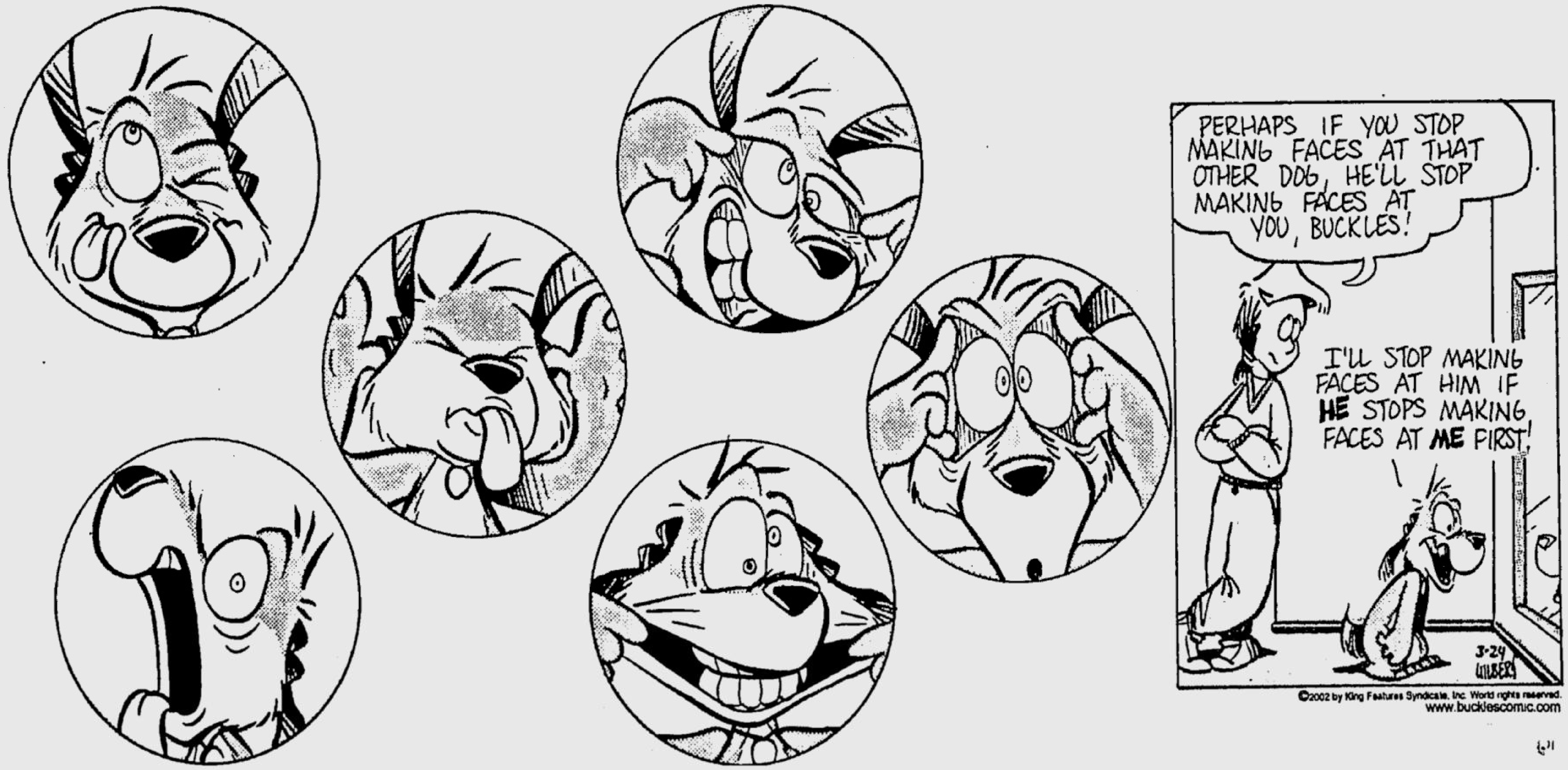
How much of the Earth's surface is water?

○ 70 percent ○ [illegible] percent
○ [illegible] percent ○ [illegible] percent

answer: 70%

BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT



PERHAPS IF YOU STOP MAKING FACES AT THAT OTHER DOG, HE'LL STOP MAKING FACES AT YOU, BUCKLES!
I'LL STOP MAKING FACES AT HIM IF **HE** STOPS MAKING FACES AT **ME** FIRST!
3-24 GILBERT

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www.bucklescomic.com

To Lolo (from page 3)

They tell me much about your past as a tall and proud protector of justice, a chivalrous knight whose heart was dedicated to serving the prejudiced and not money and recognition. They remembered you as an Atlas full of stamina when it came to managing all the cases in the province. And so will I.

Now I vow to follow in your footsteps and bring balance to justice when I grow up. I promise to study harder and to work hard. For I have nothing else to give—as Churchill so precisely said it—but blood, toil, tears, and sweat.

Much Love,
Your First Grandson
Gabriel Martin Doller

***Gab** is one of JI's correspondents and studies at the Ateneo de Manila Grade School in Quezon City. He wrote this letter "in memory of my late grandfather, who died May 14, 2001." His grandfather would have turned 75 on May 31.*

My Week... (from page 10)

ernment, and NGOs. The statement also contained our own commitment: the participation of children at all levels in all matters affecting our rights.

May 8

Something a disabled child said struck me: "It's better to be stared at than to be ignored."

May 9

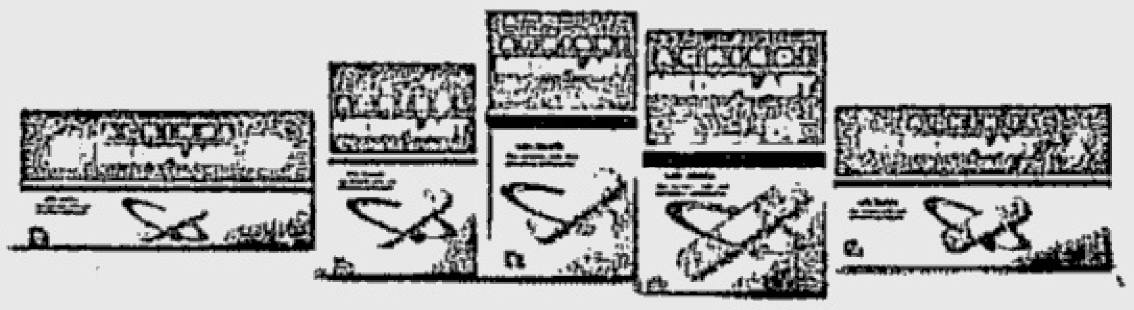
At last the consecutive sessions were finished. One of the future plans is to have the Children and Young People's Forum Three to be held tentatively in Korea on December 2002. I think that was a very good idea for children.

We left New York at around 8pm to go to Philadelphia. There we visited various historical places like the liberty bell, the bell responsible for the historic dissemination of freedom news.

.It was really an exciting trip altogether...a chance to be heard by the world, and to simply be young.

Ang batang nasusugatan,
maya-maya lang laro na naman.
'Buti na lang may Mediplast Plastic Strips.
Bilis-galing sa Mediplast.

MEDIPLAST®
First-Aid Line



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